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U.S.A: Angela Davis 'stunned' by decision to rescind civil rights award

Wednesday 9 January 2019, by [DURKIN Erin](#) (Date first published: 8 January 2019).

Move believed linked to support for Palestinian BDS movement Activist decries attack on 'spirit of the indivisibility of justice'

The veteran civil rights activist Angela Davis said she was "stunned" by the decision of Alabama's Birmingham Civil Rights Institute to [revoke](#) an award she was set to receive.

The institute announced in October that Davis, a Birmingham native, would receive the Fred Shuttlesworth Human Rights award, calling her "one of the most globally recognized champions of human rights, giving voice to those who are powerless to speak".

But last week, the organization reversed course and said she does not meet the criteria after all, in an apparent response to objections over her outspoken support of the [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions](#) movement that [protests against Israel's treatment of Palestinians](#).

"I have devoted much of my own activism to international solidarity and, specifically, to linking struggles in other parts of the world to US grassroots campaigns against police violence, the prison industrial complex, and racism more broadly," Davis said in a statement on Monday night.

"The rescinding of this invitation and the cancellation of the event where I was scheduled to speak was thus not primarily an attack against me but rather against the very spirit of the indivisibility of justice."

Davis, who was an active member of the Black Panther party, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the US communist party, said her support for Palestinian prisoners is consistent with her support for political prisoners in other parts of the world.

The activist said she will appear at an alternative event in Birmingham in February "organized by those who believe that the movement for civil rights in this moment must include a robust discussion of all of the injustices that surround us".

She cited her education at Elizabeth Irwin high school in New York City and at Brandeis University in the late 50s and early 60s, and her time studying as a graduate student in Frankfurt.

"I learned to be as passionate about opposition to antisemitism as to racism. It was during this period that I was also introduced to the Palestinian cause," Davis said. "I am proud to have worked closely with Jewish organizations and individuals on issues of concern to all of our communities throughout my life. In many ways, this work has been integral to my growing consciousness regarding the importance of protesting the Israeli occupation of Palestine."

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The Guardian

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