

# BRICUP Newsletter 34

BRICUP

British Committee for the  
Universities of Palestine

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## **A Special Edition of the BRICUP Newsletter announcing the creation of The European Platform for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (EPACBI) in Paris on September 25 and 26, 2010.**

BRICUP (The British Committee for the Universities of Palestine) and AURDIP (Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine) are issuing special newsletters simultaneously to announce the agreed founding Declaration of EPACBI. The Newsletters include supporting articles, in French and English, including statements from the two organizations and delegates who were present. Some 50 academics attended from 9 countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Discussions concerned coordination of the campaign across Europe in order to respond more effectively to the call of Palestinian civil society for a comprehensive academic and cultural boycott of Israel.

Together with representatives of PACBI (Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel), the European delegates overwhelmingly adopted the common principles laid out in the PACBI guidelines, signalling a significant extension of boycott activity. Priority areas for campaigning were agreed. These included the EU funding of Israeli academic research, extending the reach EPACBI throughout Europe and support for academics of all nationalities who suffer harassment for their support for boycott. Working groups were identified to carry these objectives forward.

A basic structure to enable the network of national groups and organizations to exchange ideas and develop joint projects was agreed upon. This included a small Coordinating Committee and plans for an email based communication system.

In the evening, delegates attended a public meeting in the centre of Paris, which brought together over 100 people to listen to prominent supporters of the academic and cultural boycott. These were: the English art critic, author and painter, John Berger; PACBI representative, Nahed Taufik; the Israeli film maker and harsh critic of Zionism, Eyal Sivan; Professor Christophe Oberlin, the eminent vascular surgeon who as part of a 3 member team from France, entered Gaza in January to treat the injured at the Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis; together with BRICUP's Chair, Professor Robert Boyce and AURDIP's President, Professor Ivar Ekeland.

EPACBI has established a website [www.epacbi.eu](http://www.epacbi.eu). EPACBI can be contacted at [epacbi@epabi.eu](mailto:epacbi@epabi.eu)

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### **Paris Declaration of EPACBI**

This declaration announces the establishment of a common European platform for the academic and cultural boycott of Israel. The national, regional and

local organisations and movements adhering to this platform:

- Accept and promote the boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions and divestment from companies that contribute to Israel's grave violations of international law and human rights.
- Support the call of Palestinian civil society for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) and accept the guidelines on its implementation issued by the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) through the Palestine Boycott National Committee (BNC).
- Agree to develop and strengthen the boycott until the Palestinian people secure a resolution of their current injustices in compliance with international law and internationally acknowledged human rights.

Europe, through both its individual states and its principal integrating institutions, plays a key role in the maintenance of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories. This support has been maintained despite Israel's repeated and well-documented violations of the human rights of Palestinians living as citizens of Israel, under Israeli occupation or as refugees. In so doing Europe's institutions ignore and negate the principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms which underpin their foundational statements. It therefore falls to European civil society to act to secure their compliance with these principles.

Boycott, divestment and sanctions is a non-violent and moral strategy for achieving change where the decades long programme of 'building bridges' to the oppressor has manifestly failed. The academic and cultural boycott is especially apposite, given the complicity of Israeli academic and cultural institutions in the gross curtailment of Palestinian academic and cultural freedoms through their direct and indirect support of government policy. The important contribution of BDS, including academic and cultural boycott, to the ending of South African

apartheid demonstrates the potential effectiveness of this approach.

We urge all European academics, professionals and cultural practitioners to consult their consciences and reconsider any links they have, or are contemplating, with Israeli institutions in their fields. We urge those who wish to achieve justice in the Middle East and to promote respect for international law around the world to form local, regional and national structures for the promotion of this boycott. We will assist and advise in the formation of such organisations in order to achieve a continent-wide coordination of academic and cultural boycott activities.

Paris, 26 September, 2010

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### **The Chair of BRICUP writes...**

The British Committee for the Universities of Palestine (BRICUP) warmly welcomes the creation of the European Platform for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel.

BRICUP has been active since 2004, and if it has gained wider notice and obtained somewhat greater success in its campaigning activities than similar organisations elsewhere in Europe, this is perhaps because the conditions for promoting BDS in Britain are rather better than in France, Italy, Germany or elsewhere. For one thing, BRICUP has had to target only one academic union, since UCU occupies a monopoly position within this sector of employment. For another, British academics are not civil servants as in many Continental countries and enjoy rather greater independence than their counterparts elsewhere. A third reason is that, notwithstanding constant charges of anti-Semitism from Zionist opponents, Britain is less susceptible to this form of intimidation on account of its recent history. Simply put, it is still universally accepted in Britain that the country bears practically no responsibility for the rise of Fascism and Nazism in the 1930s or the Holocaust which followed. On the contrary, Britain generously shed its blood to liberate Europe, while remaining the sole sanctuary for survivors of this bestial crime. There is thus far less sense of guilt in Britain for the fate of Europe's

Jews. One might add a fourth reason, namely the influence of organised religion. As in the United States, Protestant Christian churches have substantially influenced cultural life in Britain. But in contrast to the United States, Britain's Protestant churches do not interpret the Scriptures in a manner that strongly favours Zionism.

That said, all groups in Europe campaigning for the academic and cultural boycott of Israel face a host of obstacles:

- governments that seek strategic advantage by aligning themselves with the United States in defence of Israel;
- electronic and print media that report on the Middle East crisis without the courage to explain the source or nature of the conflict; and which strive so hard to appear even-handed that they regularly give time or space to apologists for Israel's most outrageous crimes;
- trade unions with long-established fraternal relations with Histadrut, which they mistake for an ally in their pursuit of fairness at work and social justice;
- university administrators whose concern for their own reputations and increasingly their fund-raising activities lead them to discourage controversial political activity on campus, some of them reviving the practice common during the Cold War of refusing meeting space for critics of Israel;
- and colleagues who confuse our boycott of Israeli universities - all of which work for the Israeli state - with boycotting individual academics and researchers, and accuse us of obstructing free speech.

Fortunately, the neo-con vision of a Manichean clash of civilisations has not crossed the Atlantic, or at least has gained little traction here. Across Europe only a small minority of citizens imagine that we face an 'existential' war with Islam, with Israel an ally and the Palestinians among the enemies of the West. The clashes that most Europeans see are the assaults of heavily armed IDF forces against young and practically unarmed Palestinians. And with every such clash, more European citizens grasp the purpose of our campaign. To cite just a few indications of recent events:

In April this year the Scottish TUC committed to a boycott campaign to halt Israeli crimes. Boycotts have been organised against Eden Springs, Marriott Hotels, and Caledonian Hotel in Edinburgh.

In August over 150 creative and performing artists in Ireland announced their commitment to BDS.

In September British trades unions unanimously endorsed a motion supporting the BDS campaign and called for a practical plan of action to be prepared within a month.

The Norwegian government has requested its massive sovereign wealth fund to divest from Israeli corporations that profit from the illegal occupation of Palestinian land or the construction of the separation wall.

The Dutch minister of foreign affairs recently cancelled a visit of Israeli mayors to the Netherlands, after learning that the delegation included mayors from towns in the illegally occupied West Bank.

The European Parliament endorsed the Goldstone Report and signalled its opposition to a further upgrading of relations with Israel until the conflict with the Palestinians is resolved.

By now our campaign has been joined by individuals and groups far beyond Europe.

After the last assault on Gaza, longshoremen in California, South Africa and Sweden have refused to load or unload ships bound for Israel.

A group of American jurists has promoted the boycott of Caterpillar Incorporated. Another activist group is promoting a boycott of Hewlett Packard on account of its sales of sensitive military products to Israel.

Turkey, after the assault on the humanitarian flotilla in May, has begun a general boycott of Israel.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the largest trades union in Canada, supports BDS. And in Montreal 500 artists and writers publicly affirmed their support for the campaign.

BDS committees have been created by academics and intellectuals in the United States, Canada, Australia, India and Pakistan. Elsewhere individual writers, artists and scientists are speaking out against further dealings with Israeli institutions. Privately thousands of individuals are taking the decision to boycott goods from Israel or illegal Jewish settlements in the Occupied territories.

In Israel itself, Gush Shalom boycotts goods produced in the Settlements. A new organisation, Boycott! involving Palestinian and Jewish citizens of Israel, has been active since 2009. In August, 60 Israeli actors, playwrights and directors announced their refusal to work in the new cultural centre in Ariel or any other settlement. When Prime Minister Netanyahu denounced their position, over 150 Israeli academics publicly associated themselves with the actors and directors, confirming that they too would refuse to work in the illegal settlements.

This is an important development, since until now only a tiny handful of Israeli academics were prepared to speak out against the illegal occupation policies of their government or its systematic disruption of higher education in the Occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. BRICUP would like to think that this display of dissent is due in some small part to their campaign for an academic and cultural boycott. Further indication of the effectiveness of the broader international BDS campaign has recently been offered by Israeli officials, who describe it as the greatest threat to the completion of the Zionist project. Yet there is still much more to do, since Israeli universities remain as committed as ever to the government's illegal policies.

Naomi Klein, the writer and militant anti-Zionist, invented the term 'shock doctrine' to describe how governments have learned to exploit crises and even to invent them in order to be able to implement deeply unpopular policies. Perhaps she was inspired by the words of David Ben-Gurion who reflected on the possibility of mass expulsions of Palestinians on the eve of the Second World War: 'What is inconceivable in normal times is possible in revolutionary times', he wrote, 'and if at this time the opportunity is missed and what is possible at such great hours is not carried out – a whole world is lost.' Once again, evidence is mounting that Israel may soon provoke another regional war, perhaps

against Hezbollah, perhaps against Iran, in the hope of creating conditions for completing the ethnic cleansing of the Occupied West Bank and Gaza. Sadly it seems likely that the situation must get worse before it gets better. However, this only makes it more important to intensify the campaign for the academic and cultural boycott of Israel, to highlight the injustice facing the Palestinian people and to hasten an end to their oppression.

Robert Boyce

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### **The President of AURDIP writes...**

The organisation over which I have the honour of presiding is called l'AURDIP, the Association of Academics for the Rule of International Law in Palestine. This bears witness to the fact that we approach the Palestinian question through law, not through politics. Eyal Sivan has pointed out earlier that the rule of international law is central to the legitimacy of the state of Israel, the only one of all states on this planet which owes its existence to a decision of the UN. If the Israeli government persists in disregarding international law and UN resolutions, it is putting in jeopardy the very foundation of the state. Among the most flagrant violations, from which all the others stem, let us just mention the expulsion of Palestinians in 1947, the military occupation of the West Bank and the settlements, the inhuman siege of Gaza and the discrimination against Arab citizens of Israel.

Whoever breaks the law incurs a sanction. Indeed, both the United Nation Charter and the cooperation treaties signed by European Union mention sanctions. In the case of the UN, sanctions have been brought to bear against other states, such as Iraq, in particularly pitiless way, or Iran, right now, but never against Israel. In the case of the EU, the sanctions described in article 2 of the treaty with Israel for non-compliance with international law and human rights have never been applied – on the contrary, the scientific cooperation extends and grows. The European taxpayer is the second largest contributor to Israeli universities, after the Israeli taxpayer. In science and technology, bringing Israel into European programs has drawn research in domains which I consider ethically dangerous and intellectually empty. Just as an example, let me mention that Motorola-Israel takes part in the project

“iDetect4All”, the purpose of which is to alert about suspect activities around buildings or resources having some strategic or economic interest.

In the case of Israel, the law is not enforced by our public officials. What then are ordinary citizens to do? Enforcing the law becomes their responsibility, but they do not have the powers of coercion which belong to the state. They must find some non-violent means of action, which strike the imaginations. Their power cannot be physical, so it must be moral.

This is why we resort to the boycott. For us, academics and artists, it has to be the academic and cultural boycott. It consists in refusing to collaborate with Israeli institution, not attending scientific meetings in Israel, refusing to participate in joint research projects with Israeli universities and research laboratories.

I am often asked: why don't you differentiate? Why not exempt that particular university, or that particular department within the university? Why don't you deprive yourself of visiting that particular researcher, just because it is within the framework of a European project you don't approve of? The reason is that I am not aware of a single Israeli university that is not deeply involved in the repression and surveillance of the Palestinian people, and which does not tailor its teaching and research to the needs of the occupation forces. Soldiers are given special treatment, military records count towards a university degree, research in nanotechnologies is geared towards surveillance techniques, teaching in ethics is geared towards the special needs of military operations and information gathering, a whole system has been put into place. Teaching and doing research in such an environment can only further its aims, and the better the teacher, the better the researcher, the more he or she contributes. History has taught us that human beings must not be judged in isolation, as if they were in an ivory tower and their actions had no consequences, but within the system where they operate and to which they contribute.

Boycotting is not enough: we must also explain why we do it. This is how it becomes a fully moral action: it tears away the lies, and forces consciences to face reality. What is happening in Palestine is well documented, and has been so for many years, but has not entered general consciousness: some of us had rather not know, others have too much to tell. This is why we have to inform, in each case we have to explain how, simply by lending one's name to

certain activities under the pretext of advancing science, one finally contributes to deeds which one would not have any part of. To give another example, the Technion (Israel Institute of Technology), conducts research on information-gathering nanotechnologies; the results can be used to build devices which would travel inside the veins and arteries of the human body for medical purposes, but also to build drones small enough to enter houses and kill inhabitants or spy on them. Both projects are developed in parallel, and collaborating on one aspect necessarily helps the other.

To boycott is also to educate. We agree that everyone has to make his or her own choices, and that no one can make them on another person's behalf. What we are striving for is that these choices be informed. We want the truth out there, because the lies have been stifling us. Just getting a room for holding this meeting has taken us a full month. Over and over again, we have been turned down by administrators of universities and colleges, not for lack of sympathy, but for fear of breaking the taboo. Most of the colleagues we speak to have a similar attitude: we are afraid that you might be right, so it is better not to find out. This is the situation which confronted Martin Luther King, when he started to fight for the civil rights of African-Americans. In 1963, as he was in jail in Birmingham (Alabama) for calling for a boycott against white-only businesses (which was no more popular at the time than the boycott of Israel is now), and for demonstrating peaceably in the streets, he wrote a famous letter to fellow clergymen, who had publicly condemned the march. I will end by quoting from it:-

“I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."

Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection”

Ivar Ekeland

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## **Why call for an academic and cultural boycott of Israel?**

You may be wondering, what is it that justifies the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)?

Let me begin by explaining why it is necessary to boycott Israeli institutions and products. The terrible reality on the ground in occupied Palestine makes the boycott of Israel, and of its complicit institutions, not merely a moral obligation, but most of all an urgent political necessity, as was the case in the days of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. The Call of Palestinian civil society for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) aims to confront Israel with its responsibilities to international law and the universal principles of human rights.

**The boycott is thus an approach based on law, whose ultimate goal is the application of international law. In keeping with this objective, the boycott will end when Israel applies international law and respects human rights.**

Civil society around the world needs to recover its political power and to refuse to resign itself to the problems of occupation, colonization, and apartheid in Israel.

Because of their prominent political and scientific roles, Israeli universities and academic institutions are necessary targets of the BDS campaign. Indeed, from the institutional point of view, the universities support the oppressive policies of the state of Israel, its army, its ideology and its discriminatory laws and practices. There is strong collaboration between Israeli universities and the politics of occupation. The Law School of Tel Aviv University, for instance, hired Pnina Sharvit Baruch, a colonel active during the recent Gaza massacres. Among the highly placed functionaries in the university hierarchy one finds well known military figures like the University of Haifa’s Arnon Soffer — who, by the way, is also Academic Director of the National Security College — who became notorious for

having placed the “demographic problem“ (in other words, the fact that there are too many Palestinians!) at the heart of the university’s program. Similarly, all the schools of natural science, notably those of Tel Aviv University and the Technion in Haifa, collaborate directly with the Israeli army on military projects such as the development of electronic gadgets used along the Separation Wall. Moreover, many Israeli academics signed petitions in support of the Israeli army during the Gaza massacres in January 2009. Every Israeli university has accepted laws and adopted measures that provide advantages to citizens who have performed military service, thereby discriminating against Palestinian citizens of Israel who do not do so. Ariel University, Bar Ilan University, and Herzog College have built campuses in the occupied territories. Tel Aviv University built part of its campus on the destroyed Palestinian town of Shayk Muwanis . In 2004, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem likewise annexed Palestinian land to extend its campus.

All this information has been well documented by studies such as the SOAS Palestine Society Report of London's SOAS, entitled "Tel Aviv University part and parcel of the Israeli Occupation," or the various reports by the Alternative Information Center, such as "The Economy of the Occupation. The Complicity of Israeli Academic Institutions in the Occupation of Palestinian Territories," published in 2009. One can add the powerful reports of Adalah, the legal centre for the rights of the Arab minority in Israel. Those who question the effectiveness of such a campaign should be aware that the boycott has been more successful during the past five years than during all the years of struggle against apartheid in South Africa. After such a short period, one can already find articles about the boycott in mainstream media outlets like CNN, the Financial Times, Haaretz, and the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

After the war against Gaza in 2008-2009 and the attack on the Freedom Flotilla — two Israeli crimes that have gone unpunished — we see yet again the urgency and the need to bring pressure to bear on Israel. The boycott is the best means at our disposal.

Nahed Taufik, representative of PACBI

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# It is not a crime to boycott Israeli goods!

## Criminal charges filed against boycott activists in France.

A non-violent weapon, the weapon of the unarmed, used in the past against South Africa, the boycott today seems to call into question the omnipotence of the realm of consumption, that of merchandise as well as that of a state—Israel—that has always enjoyed total impunity.

Today no one can any longer claim that Israel respects international law or human rights. However, nearly 80 criminal complaints have been filed against French activists, organizations, trade unions, and political parties, for their call to boycott products coming from Israel.

The filing of these complaints follow the publication of a circular by Michèle Alliot-Marie, Minister of Justice, that blurred the distinction between "kosher products" and "Israeli products" and called upon courts to be vigilant against "acts of racial discrimination"!

The [criminalization of the Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions](#) (BDS) campaign against Israel does not surprise us. It simply shows how today's world has been turned upside down:

- It is **criminal** to call for a boycott of goods produced in Israeli settlements.
- It is **normal and routine** to be a passive consumer of the products of the Agrexco Corporation, today present in Marseille, hoping to be established tomorrow in Sète, whose fruits and vegetables come directly from the settlements, in violation of UN resolutions that have condemned the occupation of the Palestinian territories since 1967.
- **No traceability rules** allow us at present to tell the difference between settlement goods and goods from Israel proper. Is it normal to buy goods produced in occupied land, in violation of international law? Must we follow the instructions of the National bureau of vigilance against anti-Semitism (BNVCA) and its president Sammy Ghozlan — responsible for the majority of these complaints against the BDS movement — and act as consumers blind, mute, deaf to the law... and happy?

As for the wish to **label the boycott an "anti-Semitic" act**, and the attempt to manipulate the memory of the Nazi genocide against European Jews, it is not only scandalous but absurd, when taken to the extreme of filing a criminal complaint against Stéphane Hessel, former French diplomat, member of the French resistance, a Jewish survivor of Buchenwald, for his public support for the campaign of economic, cultural, and academic boycott against Israeli goods and Israeli institutions.

Those in France who unconditionally support Israeli policies ought to take a look at Israel itself: at Omer Shoshan, the 19-year-old Israeli soldier recently jailed for refusing to serve in an occupation army; or at the 150 Israeli intellectuals, artists, and theatre professionals who in late August called to refuse to perform in the Israeli West Bank settlements.

## The boycott - a long history of legitimate revulsion.

There is nothing new, exceptional, or shocking about the principle of boycott. On the contrary, it belongs to a long history of legitimate reactions of revulsion, including:-

- Boycotters around the world in the 1980s, revolted at **apartheid in South Africa**.
- The Montgomery bus boycotters in 1955, revolted at **discrimination against black people in the United States**.
- The Indian boycotters of British products in the 1930s, revolted at **British colonialism**.
- And long before, several years before the American Civil War, those whose revulsion led them to call for a boycott of products of American companies built on slavery.

Faced with the Israeli army's attack last May on the Gaza freedom flotilla, in international waters; with the murder of nine Turkish activists aboard the ships; faced with the **use of unconventional weapons** like the phosphorus bombs dropped across the Gaza Strip a year and a half ago; faced with the **Israeli bulldozers** that even today continue to "Judaize" the Palestinian part of Jerusalem by building 1500 new dwellings for settlers; faced with Israel's **violations of international law** of every form the international BDS campaign against Israeli impunity, to which we belong, is another chapter in this long history. Launched in July 2005 at the call of Palestinian civil society, the boycott campaign

against Israeli policy is now international. It has been **taken up by British and Irish trade unions** as well as by Israeli anti-colonialists.

In the United States, Harvard University withdrew all its Israeli investments, worth \$40 million, and the University of Johannesburg, in South Africa, has threatened to cut its economic and academic links with Ben Gurion University.

The government of the Netherlands has just cancelled a tour by Israeli mayors because of the presence of representatives of the settlements of Efrat and Kiryat Arba. Winner of the Nobel Peace prize and representative of the struggle against South African apartheid, Archbishop Desmond

Tutu recently declared "We defeated apartheid non-violently because the international community agreed to support the disinvestment in apartheid campaign. A similar campaign can help to bring peace in the Middle East and do so non-violently."

Will Sammy Ghozlan and the French courts press charges against all of them as well for "incitement to racial hatred"?

## **The singular criminalization of the boycott in France**

The treatment of boycotters in France as criminal is a special case, where certain parties think they can break a social, civic, and anti-colonial movement by the force of the courts alone. People will one day smile at the inversion of values that treats simple citizens, defending the rights of the Palestinian people solely by the force of boycott and non-violence, as criminals, and portrays Israel as a victim. In the meantime, let us remain serious and persistent: **we have the right to boycott Israel when it does not respect international law** and refuses to take into account the decisions adopted by the United Nations.

This boycott is legitimate and we will continue to boycott, along with the international campaign that today is bearing fruit. For if the colonial policy of an overly armed state has today to hide behind the French courts, it's because that policy is morally weakened and will soon have to bow to international law.

Published in [Collectif](#) on October 18, 2010

Signed by

**Sonia Dayan-Herzbrun**, *Professor of Sociology (université Paris-Diderot), Vice-president of the*

*Association des universitaires pour le respect du droit international en Palestine ([Aurdip](#))*

**Annick Coupé**, *spokesperson of [Solidaires](#) ;*

**Gustave Massiah**, *founding member of the Centre d'études et d'initiatives de solidarité internationale ([Cedetim](#)) ;*

**Jean-Marie Muller**, *founding member of the Mouvement pour une alternative non-violente ([MAN](#)).*

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## **A Norwegian petition.**

A Norwegian petition calling for an institutional cultural and academic boycott of Israel (in line with the PACBI guidelines) has gathered 100 impressive signatories -- academics, writers, musicians, other cultural workers, and sports celebrities, including Egil "Drillo" Olsen, the coach of the Norwegian national soccer team. Drillo is a particularly huge celebrity in Norway.

After the Freedom Flotilla massacre, public opinion polls in Norway showed support for the full boycott of all Israeli products skyrocketing to 42%. The state sovereign fund, the 3rd largest in the world, with over \$300 billion, has already divested from two major Israeli companies for their involvement in violating international law: Elbit Systems and Africa Israel.

Some of the most prominent Norwegians within the cultural and academic fields who have signed are:

**Jan Vardøgen** (musician)

**Erik Hillestad** (musician)

**Gert Nygaardshaug** (author)

**Mads Gilbert** (the exceptionally brave physician who stayed in Gaza during the Israeli massacre treating some of the most difficult injuries)

Read the [Norwegian text of the call](#)

### ***The call in English***

The State of Israel occupies Palestinian land and denies the Palestinians their basic human rights. The attack on Gaza in 2009 and the ruthless and illegal blockade has shaken the world. With control over the whole of the old Palestine, Israel daily harasses the Palestinian population, banishes them from an increasing number of areas and treat them as second-

class people. The situation can be compared with that in South Africa during the apartheid era.

Israel refuses to abide by UN resolutions and international law, but is still free of international sanctions. Therefore, ordinary people take the challenge to put international pressure on Israel. Israeli universities, research institutions and cultural institutions play a key role in the government occupation. Extensive cooperation between Israel and the West in these fields has helped to legitimize the policy of oppression.

We do not want to break the dialogue, but to take responsibility and explain to our colleagues why we believe that Israel's treatment of Palestinians is unacceptable. The future for both Palestinians and Israelis are dependent on the end of the occupation policy and the guarantee of basic human rights for all who live in the area. We believe that this will not come without pressure from outside. There are also researchers and students, artists and cultural workers in Israel, who are in open opposition to the Israeli government's policy of occupation. They need international support. Palestinian academics and intellectuals have repeatedly called on colleagues in other countries to boycott the academic and cultural institutions in Israel, to end the occupation and oppression.

The signatories of this petition, cultural workers and employees at various universities, colleges, research institutes and cultural institutions in Norway will follow this request. We urge all other cultural workers and artists, staff and students at Norwegian universities and colleges, and employees of research institutes and cultural institutions to make common cause with us, by refraining from:

- Research and cultural cooperation with the State of Israel, universities, research institutions, the arts and cultural institutions, and representatives of these institutions.
- The exchange of visiting scholars - speakers, exhibitors and guest artists with these institutions.
- Award of scholarships and research grants to such institutions and their representatives.
- Participation in scientific conferences and cultural events in Israel with representatives of such institutions.

We also encourage collaboration with and support of organizations and individuals in Israel, including researchers, students, artists and cultural workers, who work against the occupation and the violation of Palestinian human rights.

We will finally encourage the boards of Norwegian academic and cultural institutions, arts organizations, trade unions at universities, colleges and research institutions, and student organizations in Norway, to support this boycott.

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**Support BRICUP**

If you wish to register as a supporter of BRICUP send an email to

[supporters@bricup.org.uk](mailto:supporters@bricup.org.uk)

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**BRICUP is the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine.** Further news of the EPACBI initiative will be reported in future issues of this Newsletter. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Email them to:-

[newsletter@bricup.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@bricup.org.uk)