

BRICUP Newsletter 85

BRICUP

British Committee for the
Universities of Palestine

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Cultural Boycott Takes Off!

In mid-February the cultural boycott of Israel took a major step. In early March it took another one. BRICUP was involved in both these linked developments. The first step was the announcement of the Artists' Pledge for Palestine, limited to those with a clear UK connection, with 700 cultural workers already signed up before the launch. The second is the publication this week of a booklet *The Case for a Cultural Boycott of Israel*.

Our name, the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine, indicates our primary academic focus; and indeed most of the BRICUP committee's members are themselves academics. But the PACBI call which stimulated the formation of BRICUP covers both academic *and* cultural boycott. With no other UK organisation dedicated specifically to cultural boycott, BRICUP has played a part in this field also, as have other organisations that have a more general remit. The main BRICUP role, especially when cultural boycott was otherwise less developed, was to compose and distribute a series of carefully researched and emotionally intense open letters to artists with impending visits to Israel. Some cried off, and some went on – but as a result of these well targeted letters they often did so amid an international firestorm of protests.

Now at last there is an organisation that takes cultural boycott in this country as its defining task: Artists for Palestine UK (APUK). It is a collaboration between Palestine activists (including a number from BRICUP) and artists. (Of course some people are both artists and activists.) But before describing the new situation, let me reprise the recent UK history of cultural boycott.

Cultural boycott in the UK

Cultural boycott activities really began to get organised in the UK when the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra appeared on the schedule for the 2011 Proms. Activists got their act together (for example organising block booking of tickets); and on the night a protest inside the Albert Hall, unprecedentedly, caused the BBC to terminate its transmission of the concert. (The IPO announced that it was going to remove London from any future tour schedules.)

Hard on the heels of that paroxysm came the announcement that Habima (Israel's National Theatre) had been invited to perform at Shakespeare's Globe in their May 2012 Shakespeare fest, itself part of the Cultural Olympiad. A large number of high-profile actors, playwrights and directors protested in a letter to the Guardian, igniting a months-long rambunctious discussion in the national press about the rights and wrongs of cultural boycott, and about the role of culture in Israel's attempt to camouflage itself.

This debate had scarcely died down when the visit of the Batsheva dance company to that year's Edinburgh Festival re-ignited it. Days of demonstrations outside the theatre where they were performing, organised by Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, drew Batsheva's artistic director Ohad Naharin out onto the pavements to debate with protesters. Later that year the national UK tour of the Batsheva Dance Ensemble, their junior company, attracted protests at every venue.

Boycott tactics

A variety of tactics have been used by those wishing to draw attention to these Israeli-state financed essays in cultural diplomacy. (The funding comes from their Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the Brand Israel strategy.) There were attempts to gain media coverage for statements by noted artists in the particular field opposing this political abuse of culture. There were demonstrations outside venues; there were interventions (more or less disruptive) inside venues. For example major reviews of Habima's *Merchant of Venice* noted, approvingly, the demonstrator who stood prominently with her mouth taped over during much of the production. Also reviewed positively was the intervention by an actor in the audience, who delivered Shylock's famous speech "Hath not a Jew eyes?... If you prick us, do we not bleed?" with Palestinian replacing Jew.

Batsheva's performances were all brought to temporary halts by protests inside the hall. Still earlier, performances by the Jerusalem Quartet (which has a history of alignment to the IDF) in both Edinburgh and London were interrupted. There are precedents for this: in the 1970's protestors in London, and round the world, campaigning for Soviet Jews to be allowed to emigrate to Israel, repeatedly interrupted performances by the Bolshoi Ballet.

There are differences of view among activists about interrupting performances. My own view is pragmatic. The aim of all cultural boycott activities must be both to bring the issue of Israel into public prominence and debate, and to provoke thought and win supporters among both audience and performers. This means that there are definitely situations where interruptions can be counter-productive.

The new strategy

There have been some 4 years between the start of organising against the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and the formation of APUK. Do I hear some muttering of "What took you so long?" There are people in this fine country that can run a mile in less than 4 minutes. Why 4 years? There are several answers to this. But principally there has been a shift of focus from being reactive to being proactive – to deciding that the cultural boycott movement should, and indeed could, determine its own agenda. And that is a much more serious business than just reacting to the latest Israeli cultural invasion.

Gradually in discussion, which included those cultural workers who had enthusiastically linked to these initial campaigns, three core projects were identified - to launch a pledge, to produce a booklet on cultural boycott, and to achieve debates on boycott in major cultural venues. A precondition for any of this was to establish a network within cultural circles, so that strategy was both well informed and carefully targeted. What became clear is that many cultural workers are quite vulnerable – visual artists are dependent on those who buy their work, orchestral players without secure contracts can be discarded, etc. There was an evident need to take the resulting fears into account in the way that arguments are presented. Moving towards APUK has been a step by step process, defining aims, making contacts, improving texts, thinking hard about the politics.

The debates strand is so far the least developed part of this strategy. The only significant breakthrough occurred after the debacle last

summer when the Tricycle Theatre was bullied into reversing its decision to reject Israeli government funding for an event due to held there. (A cabal of funders plus the Israeli Ambassador plus the Secretary of State for Culture were the enforcers.) In October a [meeting](#) was organised (at Amnesty International) which was packed out with outraged actors, artists, poets... Audience members gave several accounts of overt pressure being exerted to ensure that cultural events potentially critical of Israel were still-born. Many artists expressed the need for an umbrella organisation, in order to fight back against the threat posed to freedom of expression by the intimidation and bullying tactics of pro-Israel organisations. More contacts were made, and there were new recruits to the incipient APUK group.

Signatures for the Artists Pledge for Palestine were collected ‘under the radar’ from mid-2014 onwards. This process was made possible by the contacts already established across several artistic genres. Some signatories to previous campaigns became active advocates for the pledge, recruiting from the artistic circles to which they had access. The result is not a cultural ‘who’s who’ of Britain. There are many, many more who still need to be persuaded. Indeed there remain significant gaps in coverage – for example in the mainstream music industry. But the roster will surely continue to grow. And those already signed up do constitute an impressive array of our country’s top talent, as well as signatories from all levels and trades within the cultural industries.

Developments since the public launch of the pledge are described in the companion article by Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi.

There is a connection between the pledge and the booklet, but they are different in their stance. The pledge is deliberately limited to just one commitment - not to go to Israel professionally on officially sponsored visits or to accept Israeli institutional funding. (This is less than the full PACBI boycott commitment. Signatories do not, for example, necessarily commit to publicly opposing UK visits by the likes of Habima and Batsheva.) The advantage of a short simple statement, as opposed to a more complex multi-part one, is that it is more likely to get an affirmative response rather an “oh dear, this seems rather complicated” reaction.

Like the pledge the cultural boycott booklet was carefully prepared – drafted, redrafted and honed to achieve maximum clarity and force. This is the

first attempt anywhere to communicate so full an account of why cultural boycott is both needed and justified. It is aimed primarily at an audience of cultural workers, many of whom will have a gut reaction to Israel’s policies but may not put political questions high up among their priorities. But it also speaks to activists: it provides arguments that they can use when they get the chance to communicate with artists (either on line or in person) who might be dissuaded from going to Israel, or persuaded to sign the pledge.

The booklet is an easy read. It is a reliable read – the facts here are our friends, and it provides copious references to the original sources. And it is peppered with pungent statements, from a wide range of highly reputed artists (all from the UK) across the gamut of creative forms, about why they support cultural boycott.

The Case for a Cultural Boycott of Israel is available direct [from the APUK website](#). It covers, among other things,

- Why Israel deserves this special attention. And why in particular a cultural boycott makes sense.
- How Israel suppresses Palestinian culture
- Israel’s manipulation of culture as an alternative form of diplomacy, an attempted smokescreen for its brutal policies
- How major campaigns in the UK have contested Israel’s cultural narrative
- Why free cultural exchange cannot exist in a situation of injustice

On top of that it provides an extensive ‘frequently asked questions’ section, in which the doubts that people may have about joining a cultural boycott are each expressed as persuasively as they can be – and then answered. There is also a short section on what activities are legitimate to boycott (in effect a pocket guide to the PACBI guidelines) and what are not. In particular, of course, it is institutions and not individuals which should be the targets.

This has been a movement activity. But it is BRICUP that has made the publication of the booklet financially possible. BRICUP itself has placed a bulk order paid for in advance, and individual committee members have made donations and loans running into thousands of pounds. Those loans need to be repaid. Donations towards the cost from BRICUP supporters would be very welcome. Details on how to do this are at the end of the Newsletter.

UK artists' pledge for Palestine attracts 1000 names

On February 14, a letter in the Guardian announced that 700 UK signatories, representing every field of the arts, had pledged not to accept professional invitations to Israel as long as the state continues to deny basic Palestinian rights. The names, collected without the benefit of any publicity over the previous year, included many leaders in their fields:

Writers Tariq Ali, William Dalrymple, Aminatta Forna, Bonnie Greer, Mark Haddon, Asif Kapadia, Hari Kunzru, Liz Lochhead, Jimmy McGovern, China Mieville, Andrew O'Hagan, Laurie Penny, Michael Rosen, Gillian Slovo, Ahdaf Soueif, Marina Warner, Benjamin Zephaniah

Film directors Mike Hodges, Peter Kosminsky, Mike Leigh, Phyllida Lloyd, Ken Loach, Michael Radford, Roger Michell, Julien Temple

Comedians Mark Thomas, Jeremy Hardy, Alexei Sayle

Musicians Richard Ashcroft, Jarvis Cocker, Brian Eno, Kate Tempest, Roger Waters, Robert Wyatt

Architects Peter Ahrends, Will Alsop,

Actors Rizwan Ahmed, Anna Carteret, David Calder, Simon McBurney, Miriam Margolyes,

Theatre writers/directors Caryl Churchill, Dominic Cooke CBE, David Edgar, Sir Jonathan Miller, Mark Ravenhill,

Visual Arts Ed Atkins, Phyllida Barlow, John Berger, Mona Hatoum.

Within a fortnight – despite a small number of drop-outs (not including any of those named above) - the number had swollen to one thousand. New signatures continue to be added daily.

The full text of the pledge they signed reads:

We support the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality. In response to the call from Palestinian artists and cultural workers for a cultural boycott of Israel, we pledge to accept neither professional invitations to Israel, nor funding, from any institutions linked to its government until it complies with

As explained elsewhere in this newsletter by Jonathan Rosenhead, the pledge is an initiative of a new group, [Artists for Palestine UK \(APUK\)](#). Around a year ago the artists and activists who were to become its founders began gathering signatures for the pledge. Then in the summer, Israel's assault on Gaza became the tragic impetus to several hundred names being added, simply by word of mouth – or more accurately, email. Each individual who signed was assured that their name would not be made known until a substantial critical mass had been reached.

As 2014 drew to a close, the group found themselves sitting on an impressive list of pledge adherents that – without a public face for the campaign - was unlikely to gather any more momentum until the next Israeli outrage. If the pledge was going to serve its intended purpose, as a collective rejection of Israel's abuse of culture for political goals, it was essential to spread the word openly. Arts professionals at all levels and in every field needed to see that they would not be alone if they made their voices heard.

In launching the pledge, theatre director Hilary Westlake, a member of the organising collective, said APUK's message to British artists is: 'Together we can defend our right to decide whose patronage we accept, despite groundless accusations of antisemitism and threats of financial and reputational ruin.'

Pre-launch, exposing the signatories to the full glare of publicity was a daunting prospect. Some were stalwarts who had previously faced the ire of the pro-Israel lobby and would not buckle under fire. But many were completely new to this game. All deserved to be armed to deal confidently with what was to come.

A mailout on Feb 6 provided [a guide](#) to the kind of hostile questions signatories could expect to face and proposed some answers. It invited support for a letter to the Guardian which read as follows:

“Along with more than 600 other fellow artists, we are announcing today that we will not engage in business-as-usual cultural relations with Israel. We will accept neither professional invitations to [Israel](#), nor funding, from any institutions linked to its government. Since the summer

war on Gaza, Palestinians have enjoyed no respite from Israel's unrelenting attack on their land, their livelihood, their right to political existence. "2014," says the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem, was "one of the cruellest and deadliest in the history of the occupation." The Palestinian catastrophe goes on.

Israel's wars are fought on the cultural front too. Its army targets Palestinian cultural institutions for attack, and prevents the free movement of cultural workers. Its own theatre companies perform to settler audiences on the West Bank – and those same companies tour the globe as cultural diplomats, in support of "Brand Israel". During South African apartheid, musicians announced they weren't going to "play Sun City". Now we are saying, in Tel Aviv, Netanya, Ashkelon or Ariel, we won't play music, accept awards, attend exhibitions, festivals or conferences, run masterclasses or workshops, until Israel respects international law and ends its colonial oppression of the Palestinians. To see the full list of supporters, go to artistsforpalestine.org.uk.

The letter, signed by 112 pledge signatories, appeared online on Feb 13 and in the newspaper on Feb 14. Simultaneously novelist Kamila Shamsie explained her reasons for signing in the Guardian's review section and the Artists for Palestine UK website went live listing all the signatories to date. It carried an impressive [selection of statements](#) from many of them and opened up the pledge for signing by any UK cultural worker. APUK's Facebook page quickly attracted more than 2000 likes, supportive emails poured in and fair-minded articles appeared in respectable arts media - Dazed, The Art Newspaper, Artnet, Architects Journal, Building Design and The Stage among others. Where opposition has been voiced, we have claimed the right to reply. Abusive emails and Facebook posts are easy to delete or file away for future reference.

So launching the pledge has done exactly as intended – to ignite debate about the purpose and ethics of cultural boycott on sites and in magazines taken seriously by artists. Of course there needs to be much more, and we need to be ready to challenge the predictable smears and allegations of antisemitism and to retaliate when the campaign is presented – disingenuously or otherwise - in an unflattering light. The [Art Newspaper](#), for example, carried a reasonably

balanced discussion of the issues the pledge raises, but chose to top their story with the suggestion – completely erroneous - that a well-known signatory had been listed despite not wanting to be named. We are negotiating a clarification. In advance of the Pledge launch, [Artleaks](#) carried a piece titled 'Challenging Double Standards: a call against the boycott of Israeli art & society', which paid little attention either to the situation they purported to analyse, or to the movement they aimed to critique. APUK stepped in with a reply, also endorsed by the Israeli group Boycott from Within, stating '...It is odd that a text which insists on the need to reject generalisation and respect 'specificity', is itself so unspecific.

There are some quite basic 'specifics' that don't get mentioned at all: occupation, ethnic cleansing, settlements... 'When online magazine artnet.com published a sneering piece by art critic JJ Charlesworth, [The Cultural Boycott of Israel Isn't Solidarity, It's Condescension](#), it gave APUK the [right of reply](#) but did not see fit to note the fact on its Facebook page, where Charlesworth was prominently plugged. We are challenging this lack of balance. The Guardian published the launch letter and a short piece by pledge signatory Kamila Shamsie, hidden in the Writers and Books section of the Review which does not appear online. Then on Feb 19 it published a vicious attack on the hundreds of pledge signers from Yair Lapid, a former Israeli finance minister, [on the letters page](#) and [in Comment is Free](#). Naming well-known artist signatories to the pledge, Lapid [alleged](#) that the logical outcome of their action was the mass slaughter of Israeli Jews – 'Women and children first.' Israeli dissident writer Gideon Levy trashed Lapid's arguments in Ha'aretz. His blistering assault, [reproduced on the APUK website](#), says: 'Lapid's Israel is the height of temerity – the occupier that not only presents itself as a victim, but as the only victim. It is hard to believe, but that's the truth.' We have yet to persuade the Guardian to publish a corrective piece from those Lapid attacked.

APUK is determined to widen rational debate on cultural boycott among artists and the public at large. This is just the beginning of the fight for artists' right to say "no" to the pro-Israel cultural establishment. Breaking through the deadweight of fear and – in too many instances – craven acquiescence within UK arts organisations will be a long struggle. At the time of writing (March 7) [news was emerging](#) of a theatre in Wales that had taken all the captions off photographs in an

exhibition showing, according to the affronted artist, “the scattered remains from across the country of the now historic Palestinian presence in much of Israel’s landscape.” The captions were removed when a Christian pastor claiming to represent unnamed Jewish organisations visited the venue threatening unspecified consequences if the “political” material remained on view. They were only reinstated after artists and activists in the area complained to the theatre and local media.

We have often said that it won’t be too long before the question both artists and academic have to face is not “Why Boycott?” but “How can you not?” We are not there yet but the launch of the Artists’ Pledge for Palestine is a step in the right direction.

Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi

Israel’s multi-pronged assault on education in Palestine:

BRICUP-AURDIP letter to the EU

Since 2004 BRICUP has led the boycott of Israeli higher education institutions on account of their complicity with the state in the illegal occupation of Palestinian land and their manifest indifference to the plight of their Palestinian counterparts, which struggle even to exist under the occupation. The indifference was demonstrated seven years ago when four well-respected Israeli academics circulated a petition to colleagues. As they pointed out, the academic freedom Israelis demanded for themselves was being systematically denied to Palestinian academics by the actions of their own government. They therefore called for signatures to a letter of protest. The substance of their petition was simple and uncontroversial:

We protest against the policy of our government which is causing restrictions of freedom of movement, study and instruction, and we call upon the government to allow students and lecturers free access to all the campuses in the Territories, and to allow lecturers and students who hold foreign passports to teach and study without being threatened with withdrawal of residence visas. To leave the

situation as it is will cause serious harm to freedom of movement, study and instruction – harm to the foundation of academic freedom, to which we are committed.

The petition reached approximately 8,500 Israeli academics, but a mere 407 - less than 5 per cent – chose to sign it [1]. Since then, Israeli academics have shown no sign of changing. Indeed, if anything, their indifference to the oppressive policies of their government has been growing. In 2011, only 165 protested against the government’s decision to elevate Ariel College, located in an illegal West Bank settlement, to university status. [2]. In 2014, when Israeli forces targeted schools and universities in their assault on Gaza, barely three dozen Israeli academics signed a letter of protest. [3].

The letter below, from BRICUP and its French associates in AURDIP (Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine) to the European Union, highlights some, though by no means all, of the ways Israel obstructs education for Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. School children in their hundreds are arrested and detained, often without charge. Access to schools and colleges is obstructed by checkpoints, roadblocks, walls and fences. Roads open to settlers are closed to Palestinians. Students in Gaza are barred from taking up scholarships abroad or places at West Bank universities. Academics are barred from leaving the Occupied Territories or, if they are foreign nationals, from entering or re-entering. In its assaults on Gaza in 2008-9 and in 2014, Israeli military forces evidently singled out schools and universities for destruction: 280 were damaged or destroyed in the first assault [4], 244 in the second [5]. Of the seven universities in Gaza, the Islamic University and the Gaza branch of Al Quds Open University were severely damaged in the Israeli assault last summer [6]. Of the 1483 Palestinian civilians killed in the assault, no fewer than 421 were university students [7].

The European Union could do something about this. In fact, as the BRICUP-AURDIP letter points out, the EU’s own treaty with Israel obliges it to act. Israel, uniquely among non-European countries, enjoys full access to EU research funds and benefits enormously from them. Yet Article 2 of the Association Agreement between the EU and Israel stipulates: ‘relations between the Parties

should be based upon respect for human rights and democratic principles which guide their domestic and international policies and are an essential element of the Agreement.' Since Israel displays no such respect, the EU Commissioners should suspend the Agreement along with Israel's access to EU research funding.

Will the EU act? The Commission's decision in 2013 to publish guidelines affirming that EU research funds may not go to Israeli entities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories makes us cautiously optimistic that it may eventually go further. Meanwhile, sadly, Palestinian access to education seems certain to become even more difficult, as our letter to the Commissioners attests.

Robert Boyce

Footnotes:

[1] <http://academic-access.weebly.com>

[2] <http://israeli-academics-for-peace.org.il/en/41/petition-regarding-ariel-college/>

[3] <http://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/handful-israeli-academics-responds-call-condemn-gaza-slaughter>

[4] United Nations General Assembly, A/HRC/12/48, 25 September 2009, p.25

[5] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28439404>

[6] <http://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2014/08/educational-toll-gaza-war-two-universities-six-schools/>

[7] <http://www.alternativenews.org/english/index.php/special-reports/gaza/438-report-universities-students-targeted-in-gaza-attack>

THE LETTER

Paris, 22 February 2015

To:

Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science

Dear Madam, Sir,

As academics and citizens we wish to draw your attention to the serious situation facing many Palestinian schoolchildren, students and teachers. Not only are they being arbitrarily detained by Israeli occupation forces, but the conditions of their arrest and their treatment in captivity are contrary to international law.

Our Associations wrote to the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science on 10 January last concerning the arbitrary detention of the Palestinian astrophysicist, Imad al-Barghouthi (1). Following international protests, and two days after the publication of an article in the scientific journal Nature (2), the Israeli authorities quietly released Professor al-Barghouthi: proof, if this were necessary, of the iniquitous character of his detention, as we noted in our letter.

Not all Palestinian academics held as political prisoners have benefited from the international attention received by Professor al-Barghouthi - which is why many are still held in Israeli prisons. As Professor al-Barghouthi wrote to us the day after his release (3), "According to the Association of Palestinian Prisoners, the wave of mass arrests conducted by the Israeli military during the first two weeks of December included more than 54 Palestinians besides myself. Another Palestinian academic, Dr. Ghassan Thuqan of the education department of An-Najah University has been languishing in poor health in the Naqab desert prison (Negev) without charge or trial since 9 July last. His appeal to the authorities who detained him was rejected on the basis of a "secret file", as commonly happens in appeals of this sort. In January, the military court in Ramallah extended incarceration orders without charge or trial against nine Palestinian prisoners."

The Israeli practice of administrative detention without charge or trial has become widespread, the Israeli army making ever more frequent use of Military Order 101 (4) which de facto deprives Palestinians of East Jerusalem and the West Bank of freedom of expression. Any non-violent public expression of opinion or politics is liable under this Order to 10 years' imprisonment. Quite evidently, the Israeli goal is to break all resistance to the colonisation of East Jerusalem and the West

Bank. The Military Code has also been used to arrest and detain students and teachers from Palestinian campuses who gathered to protest against the latest assault on Gaza, or more generally defenders of Palestinian human rights, such as the teacher Abdallah Abu Rahma. He was arrested for exercising his legitimate right to non-violent protest in 2012 against human rights violations and abuses perpetrated by the State of Israel in the Occupied Territories. He was originally to be tried on 8 February last, but his sentencing was postponed to 23 February.

The European Union, to remain faithful to its humanist and democratic values - and therefore to remain a source of pride or simply relevant to its citizens - cannot ignore this intolerable situation. Dr. Ghassan Thuqan and Abdallah Abu Rahma must be released from detention as soon as possible. The European Union should and can demand this of the Israeli authorities: the movement in which AURDIP and BRICUP participated succeeded in securing the release of Professor Imad al-Barghouthi within days. Let us work again for justice and human rights!

Equally grave is the Israeli authorities' treatment of Palestinian children. Although it is very difficult to establish the precise number of Palestinian children imprisoned in Israel, there are undoubtedly hundreds under 18 years old in detention. To mention just one case, Khaled el-Sheikh, a boy of 14 from Beit Annam in East Jerusalem, has been unlawfully detained for nearly two months (5). Many other 15, 16 and 17 year-olds have been "simply" detained or sentenced to as much as several years imprisonment - among many others, Ahmad Muhammad Musalmah of Hebron, a 16 year-old sentenced to 5 years imprisonment by the occupiers (6).

This behaviour by the Israeli armed forces is not limited to young boys. The case of Malak al-Khatib, a 14 year-old girl accused of "throwing stones" by the Israeli army of occupation, is emblematic. Malak was one of the youngest Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails. As the result of international protests she was released a few days ago (7). But many other girls are still incarcerated and mistreated in Israeli prisons, as Malak al-Khatib avows she suffered (8). We call upon the European Community to demand guarantees for the respect of individuals in custody and their quick release. In this context we must mention the recent case of Lina Kettab, an 18 year-old student at Bir-Zeit University and folk dancer, who was arrested on 13 December

last and sentenced by an Israeli court to six months in prison plus three years suspended and a fine of \$1500 equivalent for 'throwing stones' and 'participating in illegal demonstrations' (9).

The international community and the European Community should also react firmly to the strategy of terror systematically used by units of the Israeli army. This is a matter of urgency. A growing number of Palestinian children from East Jerusalem and the West Bank are being detained without justification and subjected to severe physical and psychological trauma, as well as being denied their right to education (10).

According to DCI-Palestine, nearly 200 Palestinian children were detained every month in Israeli prisons between January and November 2014 (11). All observers agree moreover that in addition there were probably several hundred Palestinians under 18 years of age in East Jerusalem who were assigned to house arrest or placed in custody. These procedures amount to a form of ethnic cleansing, with the Israelis' clear but unstated goal of making life impossible for Palestinians in Jerusalem.

Many of these children have been arrested in night raids by the Israeli armed forces, who seize them from their homes in a terrifying manner, after midnight, using indiscriminate violence. They are handcuffed, blindfolded, beaten and disoriented during their transfer to interrogation. In most cases their parents are not informed where they are being detained, and the detainees do not receive legal assistance. The juvenile detainees are often forced to confess to crimes they did not commit. (12) Some children are placed in solitary confinement, which is not only a violation of international law but is also considered a form of torture when applied to minors. Some member states of the international community - including the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in the European Union - have been disturbed by this serious violation of international law and acknowledged to UNICEF the devastating effect of these recurrent nocturnal raids. Despite taking note of these criticisms, however, the State of Israel has given free rein to these old practices of terrorizing the civilian Palestinian population and especially its children (13).

We are told by those who despair of politics that Europe cannot enforce respect for human rights everywhere and in all circumstances. There is nonetheless a simple way to bring the State of Israel to behave with more reason and restraint. As we pointed out in our letter of 10 January,

"Israel has access to EU programmes of research and innovation, notably 'Horizon 2020', on the same basis as EU member states. Israel indeed has just obtained 27 scholarships from the European Research Council for young researchers, placing it fifth among all eligible countries. But access to this program is subject to explicit conditions concerning respect for fundamental rights. Article 2 of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Israel stipulates that 'relations between the Parties should be based upon respect for human rights and democratic principles which guide their domestic and international policies and are an essential element of the Agreement'."

All that is needed is for the EU to apply its own principles, as expressed in Article 2 of the Association Agreement for the European Union to suspend Israeli access to all EU research and innovation funding so long as Israel violates the rights of Palestinians to education.

Yours respectfully,

Ivar Ekeland, Président de l'Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine ([AURDIP](http://www.aurdip.fr))

Jonathan Rosenhead, Chair, British Committee for the Universities of Palestine ([BRICUP](http://www.bricup.org))

Footnotes to the letter to the EU

- (1) <http://www.aurdip.fr/aurdip-and-bricup-s-letter-to-the.html>
- (2) Scientists protest detention of Palestinian physicist by Michele Catanzaro, Nature, 21 January 2015 - <http://www.nature.com/news/scientists-protest-detention-of-palestinianphysicist-1.16770>
- (3) <http://www.aurdip.fr/letter-from-the-palestinian.html>
- (4) Military Order 101, the Israeli NGO B'Tselem - http://www.btselem.org/demonstrations/military_order_101
- (5) <http://samidoun.ca/2015/02/take-action-free-palestinian-child-prisoners-kaled-al-sheikh-and-malaak-al-khatib/>

- (6) <https://www.facebook.com/ppsmo?fref=nf>
- (7) Israel releases Palestinian schoolgirl, 14, from jail, Ma'an News Agency (February 13 2015) - <http://www.maannews.com/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=759412>
- (8) Girl, interrupted - but free from Israeli prison, by Gideon Levy and Alex Levac, Haaretz 20/02/2015 - <http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/twilight-zone/.premium-1.643245> (also available at <http://www.aurdip.fr/girl-interrupted-but-free-from.html>)
- (9) <http://mondoweiss.net/2015/02/sentences-palestinian-protesting>
- (10) Palestinian youth facing psychological trauma and educational neglect Following Israeli detention by Leah R. Platkin member of the Israeli NGO-Social Ossim Shalom-Workers for Peace and Social Welfare - <http://mondoweiss.net/2015/02/palestinian-psychological-educational>
- (11) Defence for Children International Palestine - <http://www.dci-palestine.org/content/child-detainees>
- (12) Palestinian victims of Israeli children to coerce confessions abuse designed by the NGO DCI-Palestine - <http://www.dci-palestine.org/documents/palestinian-children-victims-israeli-abuse-designed-coerce-confessions>
- (13) Pilot study to end night Arrests suspended by the NGO Military Court Watch - <http://www.militarycourtwatch.org/page.php?id=HjCVj0O3dwa478353Afse6QORvSG>

Roma 3 University withdraws from hosting a discussion panel with [Ilan Pappé](#).

This is an appeal from academics, inviting you to sign the following letter of protest at the link provided at the end of the letter.

THE LETTER

We the undersigned are shocked and bewildered to learn that the University of Rome 3 withdrew from hosting an important academic conference on topical and important issues such as conflicts, nationalism, and political and cultural identities in Palestine-Israel and the Middle East at large. The

event, scheduled to take place in the University of Rome 3, at the Centro di Studi Italo-Francesi's premises, featured the participation of national and international scholars and intellectuals invited to a dialogue with renown Israeli historian, Professor Ilan Pappé.

The withdrawal of the venue, which happened at the very last minute – when the event had already been widely publicized – risked preventing the organizers from finding an alternative venue and reorganizing themselves and left the organisers, the invited speakers and the audience outraged. The University later resorted to offering a dislocated and unknown venue, while delegitimizing the event by requiring the organisers to remove the University logo from all leaflets and invitations, and by deleting information about the event from the University website.

The University declined to give clear explanations outside of supposed technical-procedural problems in requesting the venue by the organisers. These allegations were unfounded, given that formalities and procedures were fully respected.

Many sources, however, (some websites, expression of part of the Jewish community claimed paternity) revealed the actual reason being pressure exercised by the Jewish community and the Israeli embassy in Rome to prevent the event from taking place in a venue considered “improper” due to its location in proximity to the former Jewish Ghetto of Rome. This, if confirmed, adds insult to injury. Silencing a debate because some of the speakers are widely committed to denouncing the long term Israeli violations of Palestinians' rights through a sinister and cynical manipulation of the Holocaust memory abuses both the right of the Palestinian plight to be heard and the memory of the victims of genocide committed on European soil by fascist and anti-Semitic regimes.

In these terms, we perceive the act as an attempt to silence debates and critical voices and as a grave infringement on academic freedom and freedom of speech.

It seems that in Italy, as in the rest of Europe, offending Muslims with cartoons of the prophet is hailed a sacred issue of freedom of speech, whereas the freedom of speech over the Middle East and Palestine is severely curtailed, if not denied. The double standards and exceptionalism shown in the case of any debate about Israel make a mockery of the discourse on freedom of speech

that was piously pushed forward in France in the wake of the horrible attacks in Paris this winter.

These acts did not prevent the event from taking place, however. The conference took place in another venue and was attended by a very large audience of over two hundred and fifty people: academics, students, journalists, ordinary citizens participated in a rich and lively debate contributing to the success of the event.

However, we are left with a profound sense of injustice and outrage at the shirking of its primary responsibility by the University of Rome 3 which, as a higher education institution, should have among its primary aims that of increasing opportunities for debates that foster critical thinking, not their censorship. By subjecting itself to unacceptable forms of outside intimidation and pressure, the university not only discredited its own scholars and academic community, but also the many ordinary citizens, journalists, activists, students who in Rome and Italy uphold the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom, and who believe in higher education institutions' independence from external pressure.

Despite the shameful behaviour of the University of Rome 3 we, as academics, remain committed to developing critical thinking and debates, whether they concern the Middle East, the Palestine question or any other areas in the world where violations of rights are experienced and silenced. We remain committed to denouncing these violations in our research and writing and we urge all academic communities in the world to stand against the selective use of the principles of freedom of speech and academic freedom.

Notes:

1] Use the link to sign the letter:

<https://callforacademicfreedom.wordpress.com/>

2] **STOP PRESS.** As we go to press it has been announced that Imperial College London has cancelled a Palestine conference this weekend, without giving the organisers adequate notice or explanation. The organisers have been able to move the conference to the Holiday Inn, Regents Park . The reasons for the cancellation were not made clear and all attempts to reach a solution were unreasonably rejected. The event was fully confirmed by the Students Union at Imperial College well in advance The only information given to the organizers

was that the decision was based on “external sources”.

See Haim Bresheeth at <https://www.facebook.com/haim.bresheeth/posts/10153208848233623>

Israeli Apartheid week at SOAS

During this year’s Israeli Apartheid week, students and staff members at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) took part in a referendum over whether the school should respond to the Palestinian call for academic boycott of Israeli institutions. Over 2000 members of the SOAS community took part in the vote and the result was overwhelming: 73% in favour. Equally significant is the fact that the referendum returned a majority vote from all sections of the university (See table below). The message is clear: SOAS students, academics and staff members do not want their school to be associated to the Israeli Apartheid state and its institutions

	Yes	No	Total
Students	1283	425	1708
SOAS Staff	182	123	305
Contract Staff	39	4	43
Total	1504	552	2056

However, the referendum is not binding on SOAS management and the challenge ahead will be to win full implementation. This is no easy task. Indeed, the University of Johannesburg is the only one in the world that has a full academic boycott policy. The SOAS campaign is therefore setting a precedent both in terms of taking this campaign on, and by fighting to make it a reality. Hopefully this campaign will inspire others, in institutions up and down the UK, to join us in this endeavour.

Background

SOAS is deeply connected to BDS. In 2005, after 170 Palestinian civil society organisations called on the solidarity movements around the world to fight for boycotts, divestments and sanctions, the SOAS Students’ Union was the first one to make it policy. That same year, the SOAS Palestine Society organised a conference to discuss BDS

and its implementation. Since then, the society’s annual conference draws academic, students and activists from all over the world; many academics at SOAS write about the on-going occupation of Palestine and the Palestinian people’s struggle for liberation; the student body counts many Palestinian students in its midst.

It was therefore all the more surprising when activists realised at the beginning of this academic year that SOAS had official links with the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Each year, SOAS sends students to study abroad at the HU and pays it accordingly. Like all other academic institutions in Israel, the HU is deeply implicated in the on-going colonisation of Palestine and the oppression of its people. Firstly, the HU’s Mount Scopus campus is built on land confiscated after the 1967 occupation of the entirety of historic Palestine. Secondly, the university offers classes to Shin Beit operatives, the Israeli internal secret services who regularly arrest and torture Palestinians. Thirdly, the university released a [letter](#), during the IDF’s recent attack on Gaza in the summer 2014, in which it offered special academic and financial support to, what it called, its ‘warrior-students’. Finally, the HU recognises degrees awarded by the Settler University of Ariel in the West Bank. It does not extend this recognition to degrees awarded by the Palestinian Al Quds University in the same city.

The demand of the SOAS campaign was therefore straight forward: we do not wish to be associated with this institution as long as this state of affairs continues.

Support

The nature of an academic boycott campaign is very different than the ones we are used to run in unions and student unions. It is not only a case of getting a general meeting to pass a motion, but a long term process with the aim of changing an institution’s policy.

If our votes in national bodies, in unions, and campaign groups are to mean anything, they need to be turned into effective action in our institutions, work places and communities. It is when policy, which severs links and investments, is effectively implemented that BDS truly becomes the tool it was set out to be.

The BDS campaign at SOAS therefore started by garnering support from unions and student society’s on campus. All three local unions (NUS, UCU, & UNISON), as well as student groups such as the LGBTQI+ society, the Tamil Society

and Kashmir Society, and the Islamic Society voted in favour of joining the call. Even the Skateboarding society backed the campaign! The breath of support for the campaign was captured in the [video](#) released by the campaign.

Importantly, the Justice for Cleaners campaign also came on board. This campaign has been ongoing for several years and demands that SOAS cleaners be brought in house. The last time a SOAS-wide referendum was held, it found – by an overwhelming majority – that the community wanted management to respond positively to the cleaners’ demands. The company to whom SOAS outsources its cleaners – ISS – is also active in the West Bank. The demands for the cleaners to be brought in house, and that of the BDS campaign to sever ties with Israel are therefore intimately connected.

Finally, support also came from Palestine itself. Indeed, as the referendum drew nearer, a [statement](#) by 36 Palestinian student and academic unions was released. It called on SOAS students and staff members to show their solidarity with the people of Palestine, and to do so by endorsing the academic boycott.

Building this kind of alliance was not only important in order to win the referendum; it laid the basis for what will be a long term campaign. The process of passing motions of support in unions and societies opened up sharp disagreements and debates across the school. It brought the debate to many people who had not considered the question before, and forced sympathetic staff and students to patiently and clearly explain the BDS campaign, the reasons for academic boycott, and the practicalities of the campaign. In the process people were won to the BDS campaign for years to come.

Academic Freedom

The greatest area of contention during the campaign was that of academic freedom. Supporters of Israel’s policies, defenders of Israel’s peace camp, and neutral individuals being drawn into the debate for the first time alike, raised concerns over whether an academic boycott did not hamper the principle of academic freedom. The fear that by breaking ties with Israeli institutions, we would be limiting our and Israeli academics’ rights of free enquiry, research and debate, was the dominant reason that people cited for opposing the boycott. The ‘No-Campaign’ made it its main focus.

There are two answers to this concern. Firstly, the referendum at SOAS focussed clearly on breaking all institutional links between SOAS and Israeli academia. At no point was there any suggestion that individuals would be boycotted or forbidden entry at SOAS. Secondly, it is important to raise a broader point. The debate about academic freedom continuously limits itself to the freedoms enjoyed by Israeli and European academics. Palestinian academics however, remain invisible. The reality of murder, displacement, exile, and repression is continuously erased out of the image. There is no discussion about how Palestinian academic freedom is systematically denied by physical exclusion and military destruction. Many argued that universities are important arenas for political debate and conflict resolution, but did not reflect on the reality that the majority of Palestinians cannot enter historic Palestine, let alone Israeli universities.

This erasure is of course necessary to argue down a boycott campaign. Otherwise the argument is simple: as long as Palestinians are denied access to Israeli institutions, academic or otherwise, our institutions should refuse to support their Israeli counterparts. Presented like this, BDS and academic boycotts are no-brainers. Only when the Palestinians are erased out of the picture - sometimes purposefully, sometimes by internalisation of the mainstream political discourse- can these tactics be depicted as unwarranted attacks on Israeli freedoms. The majority of students and workers at SOAS understood this.

The victory in the SOAS referendum does not represent the end of the campaign, but the beginning. The task ahead is to put enough pressure on the School’s management and governing body, for them to implement the aspirations of our community. This will mean more actions by academics, departments, student societies, unions and staff members expressing their support for the outcome of the referendum and their willingness to implement it.

The process at SOAS will also become easier when other universities start following suit. We cannot be in a situation where one university launches an academic boycott campaign and remains isolated. The experience at SOAS now needs to be replicated, and replicated again.

The Palestine Society and the BDS campaign at SOAS released a [statement](#), which concluded: “This historic result has brought us one step further in our struggle for freedom and justice.

We do not tolerate any collaboration with academic institutions which are complicit in human rights violations and which do not practice the values of academic freedom and equality. We call upon other universities to show their solidarity by joining the academic boycott.”

The task is to make this a reality, at SOAS and around the country.

Sai Englert,
Graduate student at SOAS.
Member of UCU

International Law and the State of Israel: Legitimacy, Responsibility and Exceptionalism. A conference at Southampton University

April 17th-19th, 2015

A three day conference on the State of Israel and International Law is to be held between 17th and 19th April 2015 in the Law School, University of Southampton, UK. This conference will be the first of its kind and constitutes a ground-breaking historical event on the road towards justice and enduring peace in historic Palestine. The conference is a landmark event, the first of a series that aims to inspire and equip a new generation of young Palestinian lawyers with advocacy skills and intellectual access to new legal arguments and a new legal framework for this conflict.

The conference is unique because it debates the legitimacy in International Law of the Jewish state of Israel, unilaterally self-declared after military conquest, ethnic cleansing and dispossession of the indigenous population. Rather than focusing on Israeli actions in the 1967 Occupied Territories, the conference will focus on exploring themes of Legitimacy, Responsibility and Exceptionalism since 1948 all of which are posed by Israel's very nature. The conference aims to address the relatedness of the suffering and injustice in Palestine relative to the security of a state of such nature and asks what role International Law should play in the situation.

The conference will take place over a weekend (three whole days) and the fifty invited speakers include leading thinkers and scholars from law, politics, philosophy, theology, anthropology, cultural studies, history and other connected disciplines including those invited from Israel to

ensure a balanced debate.. The key speakers and various panels will diagnose the legal position with regard to the nature of Israel thus enabling a much needed platform for scholarly debate and disagreement. It will open new possibilities of using International Law to respond to injustices and suffering that stem from the nature of the Israeli state.

The aims and objectives

To generate a multidisciplinary platform for scholarly debate about the relationship between injustices and ongoing violence in historic Palestine

To examine the role of law and in particular, International Law, both in terms of substance and Jurisdiction, can play in responding to injustices and ongoing violence in Palestine.

To help shift public debate from merely focusing on the legality of Israel's actions in the context of the discourse of partitioning Palestine, to the manner in which injustice and violence in Historic Palestine are a result of the manner the State of Israel was created as well as of the kind of state it is.

To discuss the constitution and nature of the State of Israel under the pillars of legitimacy, responsibility and exceptionalism.

To envision different senses of unique belonging in Historic Palestine that can serve as a constitutional basis for political community in Historic Palestine and to examine the integrative role of law in bringing about such vision.

To allow and to actively encourage highly different responses to all these questions.

To point out the currently highly depoliticized and dominated use of International Law by Palestinians. To that end, to educate a whole new generation of young Palestinian lawyers and legal and political scholars about new possible arguments and concepts in order to use International Law better in a way that expands legal argument beyond the '1967 Occupation' discourse.

To provide an advocacy workshop for young Palestinian scholars after the conference on the Monday the 20th April with some members of staff from Southampton and elsewhere.

Outcome and follow up

The conference will be filmed and broadcast on YouTube in addition to printed proceedings. It is intended that it will be followed up by another

conference which will be a mock trial before the International Court of Justice concerning Israel Legitimacy. The organisers are working towards the possibility of producing a 4 hour documentary perhaps through Channel 4.

By hosting a conference such as this in a leading British university, it is hoped to shift the highly problematic political debate about partition of Palestine to new ways of thinking and to legitimize new horizons of debate in turn to contribute a better understanding in the British public and political caste of the complexities of the Palestine/Israel conflict.

The project links courageous debates and thoughts to actions. It goes to the heart of Palestinian suffering in that it responds to injustices and rationalization of injustices in Palestine through International Law. The conference paves the way to actually using the law as a central tool for challenging and alleviating suffering and reflect on how new developments in International Law allow us, indeed demand, new forms of legal actions to alleviate the suffering of those whose voice is still yet unheard. It is envisaged that the conference will articulate the moral urgency, conceptual possibility and jurisdictional opening to allow new forms of legal actions and actors.

The training of young Palestinian lawyers and future leaders and scholars in a way that will encourage richer and far-ranging possibilities of argument.

Hosting

The conference is being fully hosted by the University of Southampton which is supporting it with full use of its hospitality services, event organisation, marketing network and financial administration for the organisation, delivery and recording of the conference. It is organised by Professor Oren Ben-Dor, Professor of Law and Philosophy, Southampton Law School, University of Southampton and by Professor George Bisharat, Professor of Law, University of California Hastings College of the Law, USA. The conference and the book of its proceedings will be dedicated to Henry Cattán (1906-1992), a leading Palestinian international lawyer, indeed a legal prophet, who long ago mounted a challenge to the validity of the state of Israel and the legal and moral authority of those institutions that brought it about.

Conclusions

The organisers have invited leading experts as speakers from both sides of the debate, including Israel and Palestine thus hoping to ensure rigorous and fair debate. Nevertheless, the University of Southampton has had to resist urgent calls from the Jewish Leadership Council and Zionist Federation to cancel the conference. So far this pressure has been resisted. (see: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/blogs/politics/17004-uk-university-rebuffs-call-by-israel-lobby-to-cancel-conference>).

Colin Green

“Divide and Conquer: Inequality in Health”

A review of the report by Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-I)

As perhaps the most honest and outspoken of all the Israeli based human rights activists and advocates for Palestinian health issues, the Physicians for Human Rights-Israel (PHR-I) is in a unique position to analyse and report on the health services provided by the Palestinian Authority in both the West Bank and in Gaza. Their work at the coalface, for example monitoring prison conditions and the use of torture by the Israelis, and the PHR-I mobile clinics providing essential and much welcomed clinical services to rural areas in the West Bank (as well as clinics inside Israel for the poor and for unwanted immigrants facing overt racism and discrimination) gives them access to Arab communities both sides of the 1967 border. They can see for themselves the reality on the ground and then analyse the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the WHO and other NGO reportage for its validity

The report itself is authored by Mor Efrat and is extremely well written and full of useful data mainly using common indices of population health outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (infant mortality, life expectancy and so on). It does not attempt to cover in detail all aspects of health provision. Mental health and treatment of physical and mental trauma resulting from a suffocating occupation and frequent violent military assault are just touched on. This is understandable as the data available is none too reliable. The report sets out (as its title ‘Divide and Conquer: Inequality in Health’ indicates) to prove to the international community the gross discrepancies between the health of the occupied, the victims, and that of the occupiers, the colonisers and settlers throughout Yisreal Eratz.

The reader is recommended to study and then study again the data presented in the report. It is only possible in this review to point up the most significant findings and then debate the conclusions of the report.

In summary, the findings provide stark evidence for the huge gaps between health indicators and social determinants of health in Israel within its recognised 1948 borders and neighbouring Occupied Territories which together form the reality on the ground of Yisrael Eretz. I am including only a few of the focal data points including: infant mortality in the OpT is 18.8/1000 births v. 3.7 in Israel; the maternal death rate in the OpT is 28/100,000 births v.7 in Israel; the average life expectancy of Palestinians in the OpT is about 10 years lower than in Israel; there are 1.6 more doctors to serve the population in Israel than in OpT but this is far more serious in comparing standards of training and the lack of specialists trained to international standards in the OpT (one eighth of the number in Israel); domestic and industrial water consumption in the OpT is 73 litres/person/day below the minimum recommended by the WHO (100 litres/day) with Israeli consumption some three times greater; the Palestinian per capita expenditure on health is about one eighth that in Israel.

The report analyses the control mechanisms by which Israel deliberately manipulates these grotesque differentials by preventing the PA Ministry of Health providing a decent service. These include: limitations on free movement of patients, ambulances, medicines and medical professionals within and between areas of the OpT; Israeli control of the PA budget by withholding taxes collected on customs duties and so on; limiting the number of Palestinian health professional allowed to work in the East Jerusalem hospitals; and making treatment outside Gaza or in Israeli specialist units extremely expensive (so called 'tourist rates') and/or dependent on becoming an informer for the Israeli security service (Shabak).

As for conclusions, I can do no better than quote the report itself. Describing the inequalities in health between Palestinians of the OPT and Israelis the report concludes that:
"against the background of all these facts, the nature and depth of Israeli responsibility toward the residents of the Occupied Territories must be re-examined. In practice, two populations groups are maintained under Israeli rule; one of which

has excess privileges. For this reason, we can no longer suffice with only pointing at specific responsibilities of Israel. Instead, full equality between the two groups must be demanded." When looking into the Palestinian Authority's responsibility the report asserts that indeed: "it is the duty of the Palestinian Ministry of Health to provide health services to the population to the best of its ability, but it is Israel's obligation to provide all of those services that exceed the ability of the Palestinian Ministry of Health, so that a Palestinian child and an Israeli child, who may live only a few hundred yards apart, receive the same level of medical care."

There really can be no argument with these findings and these conclusions. In international law and particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention, the occupying power must bear full responsibility for the health of all citizens under occupation. The Israeli 'lawfare' machine tries to get around these laws by pretending that these are not 'occupied territories' at all but 'disputed' Samaria and Judaea. Hadas Ziv, Mor Efrat and their PHR-I colleagues are to be congratulated on producing a succinct, accurate and hard hitting report with unequivocal conclusions and recommendations that deserve wide reading by all concerned with this conflict and its impact on the human right to decent healthcare provision."

Colin Green

Notices

BRICUP is the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine.

We are always willing to help provide speakers for meetings. All such requests and any comments or suggestions concerning this Newsletter are welcome.

Email them to: newsletter@bricup.org.uk

Letters to the Editor

Please note that we do have a “Letters to the Editor” facility. We urge you to use it. It provides an opportunity for valuable input from our supporters and gives you the opportunity to contribute to the debate and development of the campaign. Please send letters to arrive on or before the first day of each month for consideration for that month’s newsletter. Aim not to exceed 250 words if possible. Letters and comments should also be sent to newsletter@bricup.org.uk

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