



Annual Members Meeting
18th February 2016

Motion Name: Divesting from Israel's Illegal Occupation of the West Bank.

Background:

1. Israel maintains a military occupation of the region known as the West Bank and has done so since 1967. This occupation is illegal under international law. East Jerusalem is recognised as a part of the Israeli Occupied West Bank.
2. In the occupied West Bank, Israel has constructed civilian settlements in violation of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention. The illegality of these settlements is echoed by the UN General Committee, the UN Security Council, the UN Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court, the International Court of Justice, Amnesty International, the United States Government and the United Kingdom Government. The only nation to dispute this is Israel.
3. These settlements are significant in their size, their disruption of Palestinian civil life and their locations, with the recent figures given by Israel put their population at 764,250. Israel's settlement operations include settler-only roads, severe building restrictions on Palestinians, the theft of agricultural land, arbitrary home demolitions, checkpoints and domination of the West Bank's water resources. Large settlements are found in most parts of the West Bank, causing massive restriction to Palestinian freedom of movement.
4. Israel maintains two separate legal systems in the West Bank, consisting of a military court system for the autochthonous Palestinians while civil Israeli law applies to the settlers. The maintenance of two incredibly unequal legal systems for these two groups is tantamount to Apartheid.
5. Many prominent Israeli and international companies directly profit from this illegal settlement activity through contracts issued by Israel and its settler organisations. Prominent international companies that are involved include HP, who provide surveillance technology for Israeli checkpoints and Caterpillar, who provide armoured bulldozers for the destruction of Palestinian homes.
6. Many prominent Israeli and international companies benefit from these illegal settlements by basing their operations within such settlements. This often coincides with these companies benefiting from the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources and labour, as well as benefiting from illegally seized land.
7. A virtually comprehensive list of Israeli and international companies that are involved in Israeli settlements and settler activity has been compiled by the Coalition of Women for Peace and can be found online at <http://www.whoprofits.org>. This list should serve as a list of relevant companies for the sake of this motion.
8. Attempts to divest from international businesses that are benefiting from the occupation has led to ending their West Bank activities.
9. The largest illegal West Bank settlement of Ariel contains a University, appropriately named Ariel University. Despite being built on illegally seized Palestinian land and situated between two major Palestinian cities, it is not open to the Palestinians of the

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West Bank. International academic co-operation with Ariel University is tacitly normalising an illegal occupation.

10. Bristol University does not exist in a bubble. We, as a group of students have a duty to do what we can to up hold international law and aid the campaign to end the brutal and illegal occupation of the West Bank. At the very least we should not benefit those who profit from this occupation.

Purpose:

1. If this motion were successful it would help place pressure on these companies to restrict their involvement in the illegal Israeli settlements.
2. Without the backing of Israeli and international companies, Israel's settlement activity would be significantly less economically viable.
3. Currently Israel is conducting significant expansions of its existing settlements. A boycott of the companies facilitating these settlements, leading to a fall in their economically viability would help stem these expansions.
4. The current settlements are a major barrier to a lasting peace in the Israel Palestine conflict. A restriction of settlement activity can only serve to make such a peace more likely.
5. This motion differs from a boycott of Israel (e.g. BDS), in that it does not affect Israeli and international businesses active within Israel's legal borders.

Action:

1. Examine the existing contracts the University has with companies involved with settler activity. Petition the University to terminate these contracts and lobby against their renewal.
 - 2a. Attempt to persuade the University against buying the products and services of companies with involvement in settler activity. This includes any goods or produce that originates from the Israel settlements in the West Bank.
 - 2b. In light of the SU's recent commitment to the provision of kosher food, if it can be shown that particular kosher products can only be sourced from West Bank settler businesses, then the provision of these goods will be exempt from (2a).
3. Prevent academic co-ordination of Bristol University with Ariel University. This is not a ban on individuals associated with Ariel, only the institution itself.
4. Recognise the illegality of Israel's Occupation of the West Bank and Israel's settlements, as well as condemn those organisations seeking to profit from violations of international law.
5. Recognise that while some students may feel very connected to a particular nation state, this should not prevent the denouncement of particular policies of that nation state's government.

Proposed by:

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