

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS)

Introduction & Definition

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) is an inclusive, non-violent, Palestinian-led movement; it is inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement. BDS works to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians, as well as pressure Israel to comply with international law. The movement is notably anti-racist, and is inherently opposed to all forms of discrimination (including antisemitism and Islamophobia).

Why the Movement Exists

Israel maintains a brutal regime against Palestinian people, made possible due to ongoing international support; Governments fail to hold Israel to account, while corporations and institutions across the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians. Due to the failure of those in power to take non-violent action against Israel, the movement has called for a global citizens' response of solidarity in the form of Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions.

Boycott

Boycotts involve withdrawing support from Israel's apartheid regime, complicit Israeli sporting, cultural and academic institutions, and from all Israeli and international companies engaged in violations of Palestinian human rights.

Divestment

Divestment campaigns urge banks, local councils, churches, pension funds and universities to withdraw investments from the State of Israel and all Israeli and international companies that sustain Israeli apartheid.

Sanctions

Sanctions campaigns pressure governments to fulfil their legal obligations to end Israeli apartheid, and not aid or assist its maintenance, by banning business with illegal Israeli settlements, ending military trade and free-trade agreements, as well as suspending Israel's membership in international forums such as UN bodies and FIFA.

Mandates

TU Dublin Students' Union commits to both supporting and endorsing the Global BDS Movement wherever possible. This includes the following actions:

Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests

Conduct an FOI (Freedom of Information) request against TU Dublin, in order to request the details of any endowment funds, investments held in pensions, unit trusts, and other financial products, that are linked to the weapons industry. Furthermore, to request the details of any Israeli companies that have provided funding for research within TU Dublin, a list of partnerships that TU Dublin has with Israeli institutions, and a list of Israeli companies that provide any services to TU Dublin.

Lobbying TU Dublin to adopt BDS

Campaign and lobby for TU Dublin to adopt BDS; this should include a total boycott of the State of Israel (Cultural, Academic, and Economic) and divestment of college funds from Israel companies and other companies listed on the BDS Divestment List. Divestment should also include the termination of contracts with companies complicit in Israel's violation of International Law, the occupation of Palestinian territories, and/or violations of the human rights of Palestinians.

Platforming the BDS Movement

The Union must run an annual awareness campaign on the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestine, which will include information on the BDS movement, how students can support / get involved, and will ultimately aim to further the Global BDS Movement.

Complying with BDS Boycotts

The Union must ensure that it complies with the principles of BDS in all trade, business and other Union operations. However, the Global BDS Movement website also specifies that:

"We focus our boycotts on a small number of companies and products for maximum impact. We focus on companies that play a clear and direct role in Israel's crimes and where we think we can have an impact."

"The global nature of today's economy means that there are thousands of companies that have links to Israel and are complicit to various degrees in Israel's violations of international law. However, for our movement to have real impact we need our consumer boycotts to be easy to explain, have wide appeal and the potential for success. That's why globally, while we call for divestment from all companies implicated in Israel's human rights violations, we focus our boycott campaigns on a select few strategic targets. There is a lot of information online claiming that some large companies give money to Israel, some of which turns out to be false. BDS has built a reputation for strictly adhering to established facts and producing the most accurate information."

The Union therefore, to avoid the significant amount of misinformation circulating online, and to ensure its boycotts are targeted and useful, will draft an annual list of organisations to boycott, to be presented at the first Student Council of each academic year. Listed organisations must have verifiable proof, and should be prepared by the Executive, with the support of Part-Time Officers and Student Council (working group if required). This list may be amended throughout the year and subsequently re-submitted to Council.

Proposed by: Brian Jordan, President

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