

## Israeli Activists Challenge Israel's Anti-Boycott Legislation

Reporting by Peace Fellow Nikki Hodgson

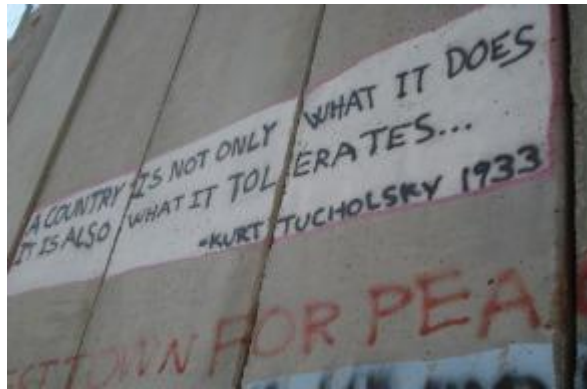


Photo by Nikki Hodgson

*Israel: In a recent statement, Israeli activists, including members of the [Alternative Information Center](#) (AIC), a joint Palestinian-Israeli activist organization, took a strong stance against the newly passed Israeli legislation which prohibits individuals from supporting or participating in boycotts targeting the Israeli occupation. AIC is a partner of The Advocacy Project.*

*The law specifically prohibits "an initiation of a boycott against the State of Israel; encouragement of participation in such a boycott; supply of information with the purpose of advancing such a boycott; and provision of assistance with the purpose of advancing such a boycott." The law also states that the court is permitted to award damages to the entity being boycotted without proof of damages. Punishments include an array of financial penalties such as fines and ineligibility for state funding or tax breaks.*

*In response to passage of this legislation, a number of Israeli citizens, including several AIC staff members, have signed the following statement:*

### **We Will Not be Silent: Statement in Regard to Israeli Anti-Boycott Law**

Wednesday, 13 July 2011 07:45 Multiple Signatories

"We're going to arrest you, but it's difficult with you because all you do is talk."  
- Israeli soldier to Palestinian organizer Mohammad Othman, 2009 [1]

We, Israeli citizens, members of Boycott! [2], hereby reiterate our support and promotion of the Palestinian Call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel, until it complies with international law and universal principles of human rights [3]. We declare this in spite of the new legislation by the Israeli Knesset, which aims to penalize our and our partners' activities, curbing freedom of speech and political organizing and most importantly - banning Israeli citizens from acting according to their conscience when it conflicts with the deplorable policies of the state.

The anti-BDS law is not the first attempt at silencing the BDS campaign. Throughout the years, Israel has detained Palestinian leaders, activists, speakers and organizers under administrative detention and without charges, or at times under various draconian charges such as 'incitement' and the organizing of 'illegal demonstrations'. On September 22nd 2009, Mohammad Othman, 34, was detained at the Allenby Crossing upon his return to the occupied West Bank following a meeting with Norwegian finance minister Halvorsen. Earlier that month, minister Halvorsen had announced Norway's divestment from the Israeli company Elbit due to "ethical concerns" [4]. Othman was arrested and held without charges or trial, under an unlawful administrative detention order and had spent much of the 113 days in detention under solitary confinement. Imprisonment of political activists is an almost routine practice against Palestinian human rights defenders.

Like such repressive practices, the newly approved Israeli law, which specifies fines and the payment of 'compensation' by Israeli citizens or residents, who initiate or encourage a boycott of Israel - is also bound to fail. We hereby support and promote the recent Palestinian call for an immediate and comprehensive military embargo on Israel [5] due to its consistent resort to violence and deadly attacks on Palestinians and Arab civilians; we stand with Jewish Voice for Peace in their campaign to bring TIAA-CREF to divest from the Israeli occupation [6]; and, we support and encourage all other BDS-related divestment campaigns, such as the campaign to Derail Israel's Unlawful A1 Train Project [7].

Lastly, we urge artists scheduled to perform in Israel to send a clear message that the Israeli occupation, the institutionalized discrimination of Israel's own Palestinian citizens and Israel's denial of the right of return and compensation of the Palestinian refugees - are neither okay nor normal, as Maxi Jazz from Faithless once put it [8]. Roxette, Ziggy Marley, Dream Theater, George Benson, Nino Katamadze, Paul Simon and John Cale - we may risk persecution for saying this - heed the Palestinian call for BDS and cancel your shows in Israel!

Signed,

Yonah Adelman  
Uri Agnon  
Daniel Atai  
Oshra Bar

Nir Harel  
Lihi Joffe  
Yonatan Kahn  
Yael Kahn

Alison Ramer  
Renen Raz  
Maya Rotem  
Leehee Rothschild

Yoav Bar	Liad Kantorowicz	Aia Safadi
Ronnie Barkan	Amani Khalefa	Lizi Sagie
Elisha Baskin	Assaf Kintzer	Emily Schaeffer
Roi Basha	Yana Knopova (Ziferblat)	Ayala Shani
Ofra Ben Artzi	Abir Kopty	Tal Shapira
Eitan Bronstein	Micha Kurtz	Yonatan Shapira
Alona Cohen	Noam Lekach	Yuval Shtrool
Alex Cohn	Roi Livne	Stavit Sinai
Silan Dallal	Gal Lugassi	Kobi Snitz
Yossi David	Emelia Marcovich	Sonya Soloviov
Eran Efrati	Anat Matar	Jonatan Stanczak
Hamutal Erato	Haggai Matar	Tirtza Tauber
Naama Farjoun	Eilat Maoz	Eran Torbiner
Tamar Freed	Edo Medicks	Tamara Traubmann
Amir Gafner	Dorothy Naor	Sahar Vardi
Amaya Galili	Irene Nasser	Itamar Weitzman
Elyakim Genazzani	Ofer Neiman	Maya Wind
Angela Godfree-Goldstein	David Nir	Sergio Yahni
Rebekah Gomez	Noa Olchovsky	Oren Yermiah
Ohal Grietzer	Jonathan Pollak	Michal Zak
Shir Hever	Leiser Peles	Amal Ziada
Connie Hackbarth	Yaar Peretz	Adi Zlotogora

On behalf of

Boycott! Supporting the Palestinian BDS Call from Within

<http://boycottisrael.info>

- [1] <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2009/it-will-take-more-than-a-wall-to-silence-us-577>
- [2] Our full name is: "Boycott! Supporting the Palestinian BDS Call from Within". Aka: "Boycott from Within".
- [3] <http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>
- [4] <http://electronicintifada.net/content/israel-targeting-boycott-movement/8524>
- [5] <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2011/military-embargo-call-7497>
- [6] <http://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/blog/jvp-demand-tiaa-cref-divest-israeli-occupation-0>
- [7] <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2010/derail-a1-statement-4494>
- [8] <http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=1337>

- Learn more about AP's Partner the [Alternative Information Center](#).
- Read Peace Fellow Nikki Hodgson's [blogs](#).
- See Nikki's [photos](#) from the field.