

ECWF FACTSHEET

BOYCOTT DIVESTMENT SANCTIONS MOVEMENT

What is BDS?

BDS stands for the movement to “boycott, divest from and sanction Israel until Israel meets its obligations under international law”. The BDS campaign is organised and coordinated by the Palestinian BDS National Committee.

The movement takes inspiration and rhetoric from the successful boycotts of the 1980's and early 1990's that forced the South African government to abandon its system of racial apartheid. The BDS movement tries very hard, despite many facts to the contrary, to draw a parallel between Israel and apartheid South Africa.

BDS leaders portray themselves as peace activists using non-violent means to force Israel to withdraw from the West Bank and make way for a Palestinian State.

If you visit the BDS website www.BDSmovement.net, it is clear that BDS leaders have a far more radical goal: the elimination of Israel as a *Jewish* state. <https://www.maccabeetaskforce.org/>

The BDS campaign urges various forms of nonviolent punitive measures against Israel until, they say, it complies with the precepts of international law. According to them, these measures should lead to Israel:

- ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the wall;
- recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
- respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194. *'The right of return'*.

These websites explain what BDS is:

<https://bdsmovement.net/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott,_Divestment_and_Sanctions

These websites the most reliable resources to counter arguments made by BDS:

<https://www.maccabeetaskforce.org/>

<https://www.ngo-monitor.org/key-issues/bds/about/>

<https://cameraoncampus.org/blog/23-reasons-why-bds-is-antisemitic/>

<https://hope4israel.org/false-claims-bds-movement/>

<https://hope4israel.org/how-are-we-to-respond-to-bds/>

A February 2019 Report, *Terrorists in Suits*, identifies links between BDS leaders and terror organizations such as Hamas.

This is the MOST comprehensive report on antisemitism and BDS.

It explains how funding of NGOs occurs and how NGO “leaders” often promote political agendas intended to manipulate the young.

https://www.gov.il/BlobFolder/generalpage/terrorists_in_suits/en/De-Legitimization%20Brochure.pdf

This is the other best research to fight BDS statements.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cc20f51ca525b73bdd50e3a/t/5e035aaff6f8a13316601016/1577278302733/The+New+Anti-Semites.pdf>

BDS Europe: Developments (2019)

United Kingdom

Boris Johnson plans to ban public institutions from holding or supporting anti-Israel boycotts.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20191220-uk-to-ban-local-councils-public-bodies-from-joining-bds/>

<https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/foreign-affairs/news/108692/boris-johnson-ban-public-bodies-running-anti-israel-boycotts>

Ireland – supports BDS

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190125-ireland-passes-bds-bill-banning-israel-settlement-goods/>

<https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/ireland-advances-bill-on-banning-exports-from-occupied-territories>

<https://www.jpost.com/Diaspora/Antisemitism/Hundreds-march-through-Ireland-to-fight-BDS-581317>

Germany

There is a new appointment of Federal Commissioner for Jewish Life in Germany and the fight Against Antisemitism. (Dr Felix Klein 2018)

The German Government adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism which states that denial of Israel's right to exist is a modern-day form of antisemitism. BDS this does by advocating a single secular state solution and right of return for all Palestinian refugees.

On 17 May Angela Merkel's governing coalition backed a *non-binding* anti-BDS resolution in the Bundestag which called the BDS movement antisemitic. The aims and methods used by BDS are antisemitic. It is not yet clear how the German Federal government will implement this resolution.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/german-parliament-denounces-anti-israel-boycott-movement-as-anti-semitic/>

BUT a resolution cannot stop BDS activity.

On 14 May 2019, the City Council of Bonn had adopted a motion named “*No place for the antisemitic BDS movement in Bonn*”. The motion called on all municipal institutions in Bonn to deny facilities to BDS groups and to refrain from supporting events of the BDS campaign, or of groups pursuing BDS goals.

In its ruling, the Court of Cologne clarified the status of this and other anti-BDS motions: “*The motions of the Bonn City Council, as well as the motions of the parliament of North-Rhine Westphalia (20 September 2018) and the German Bundestag (17 May 2019), don't constitute legislative acts, but are political resolutions or expressions of political will. These motions alone cannot justify, from any legal perspective, the restriction of an existing legal right.*”

The Court stated that the exclusion of the Women's Association from the festival on the grounds of its support for the BDS Movement constitutes “unequal treatment” (“Ungleichbehandlung”), which is “not even remotely justified”. The Court thus found the conduct of the City of Bonn in breach of the principle of equality set out in Article 3 of the German Basic Law, while also violating the association's right to freedom of opinion and expression under Article 5 Basic Law.

Freedom of speech includes the freedom to discuss and promote boycott campaigns and is also protected under Article 10 (freedom of expression) and Article 11 (freedom of assembly and association) of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), which Germany has integrated into its national legislation.

<https://bdsmovement.net/news/another-german-court-rules-favor-supporters-bds-movement>

Austria

The Austrian parliament is expected to unanimously pass a resolution against “Israel-related anti-Semitism” that calls on the government to condemn the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

On Wednesday, all five parties represented in Austria’s National Council — including the Greens and the far-right Freedom Party — agreed to support the text of the resolution and to hold a vote on it next month.

The initiative came from the center-right People’s Party, headed by former and likely future chancellor Sebastian Kurz, but legislators from all five major parties formally co-sponsored the resolution. Austrian lawmakers rarely vote against their own factions, which means that the resolution is likely to be accepted unanimously.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/austrian-parliament-sets-stage-for-overwhelming-condemnation-of-bds/>

Denmark

On 5 October 5 2018, the Danish Foreign Ministry announced new criteria for NGO funding. Specifically projects that promote BDS, organizations that question Israel’s right to exist, and those with ties to terror will not be eligible to receive funds. The guidelines declare,

“The organization and members of its Executive Board and Board of Directors may not be autonomously listed on EU or UN sanctions and/or terrorist lists. Furthermore, they may not be members of entities or groups listed on these lists... The organization must not use Danish funds to finance boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) activities. Furthermore, the organization may not outsource Danish funds to BDS activities... the actions and communications of the organization must not interfere with the goal of Denmark’s commitment to Palestine to support the realization of a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (emphasis added).

On October 19, the Danish Foreign Ministry announced grants under its new criteria to NGOs active in the Arab-Israeli conflict. All Palestinian NGOs with ties to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) terror group that had previously received grants are no longer receiving funds. Palestinian NGOs that promote international lawfare against Israel were also absent in the new funding list.

<https://www.ngo-monitor.org/denmark-outlaws-funding-to-groups-supporting-bds-or-tied-to-terror/>

Czech Republic

On October 22, 2019, the Chamber of Deputies passed a non-binding resolution "condemn[ing] all activities and statements by groups calling for a boycott of the State of Israel, its goods, services or citizens." The resolution was introduced by Jan Bartosek leader of the chamber's Christian Democrats caucus.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott,_Divestment_and_Sanctions

