



Supporting  
Palestinians

Boycott  
Disinvestment  
&  
Sanctions

Campaign  
Pack

**stuc**

### Our decision to support BDS

STUC's decision to promote a campaign of Boycott, Disinvestments and Sanctions against the state of Israel was not taken lightly. Over a period of two years, STUC considered the issues; consulted with Palestinian trade unionists; listened to the views of the Israeli trade unions; and in 2009, organised a major fact finding mission to Israel/Palestine where the delegation spoke with dozens of peace and solidarity organisations. STUC Congress agreed to promote the campaign in 2009 after agreeing the report carried on page 15 of this pack.

### Why?

60 years of United Nations resolutions have not resulted in any progress for Palestinians in the Occupied Territories in Gaza and the West Bank – including occupied east Jerusalem.

Israel's continuing policy of building settlements in Palestinian territory is a violation of international law. These settlements are rightly classed by the United Nations as areas of military occupation. 20,000 Palestinian homes have been destroyed by Israel since 1967 and a segregated road system is used in the West Bank to carve it into Bantustans limiting free movement, free association and economic activity.

Israel's eighteen-foot concrete and barbed wire barrier "security fence" which is based on the expropriation of Palestinian land and the physical separation of communities has been declared illegal by the International Court of Justice and the UN. It deserves its increasingly common description as the "apartheid wall."

In three weeks between December 2008 and January 2009 during its Gaza offensive, Israeli forces killed 1400 women and children, actions which were described by the UN as "indicating serious violations of international human rights" and "amounting to war crimes, and possibly crimes against humanity."

### Why now?

The response of international governments to Israel's continued violation of international law and its abuse of human rights has been inadequate. Israel continues to trade, import weapons and assert itself on the international stage with impunity.



*"... you can't have a bunch of little bantustans or the whole West Bank chopped up into non-coherent, non-contiguous pieces and say this is an acceptable state..." - Former US Secretary of state Colin Powell*

## What do we hope to achieve?

The campaign for BDS is part of the worldwide movement of civil society in support of the Palestinian people for national, civil and human rights and has several purposes.

- It lets the Palestinian people know that they are not forgotten and the justice of their cause is recognised.
- It sends a signal to Israel that if it continues to flout UN resolutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention and other international laws, and until it ends its brutal occupation, it will meet with the same response as any other oppressive regime breaching international law.
- It enables decisions made in their everyday lives by people outside Israel and Palestine to refresh and reinforce their opposition to Israeli policy.
- It exerts moral pressure on the British Government by giving expression to the desire to move towards a more ethical foreign policy.
- It provides an excellent way of stimulating public debate, offers a focus for leafleting and discussion, as well as exerting moral and economic pressure on Israel to comply with international legislation and principles of justice.
- Apartheid was weakened by a similar international movement of solidarity that succeeded in branding South Africa as a pariah state. Despite obvious differences between these two forms of oppression, this antecedent provides an inspiring model.

*'I've been very deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa. I have seen the humiliation of the Palestinians at checkpoints and roadblocks, suffering like us when young white police officers prevented us from moving about.'*

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

## What can trade union organisations do?

Promote the case for Boycott Disinvestment and Sanctions by:

- Holding local or branch meetings with invited speakers, film and campaign materials from organisations listed in the resources section of this pack.
- Contacting local and national politicians to explain the reasons for supporting BDS
- Writing to local church, community and campaigning organisations making the case for boycott
- Writing letters to the press highlighting continuing oppression by the state of Israel of Palestinian people
- Holding information stalls in streets and at events
- Undertaking one or more of the specific campaigning actions detailed in this pack.

## Primary Boycott

Individual consumers can show their opposition to Israeli policies by participating in a consumer boycott of Israeli goods and services. In the primary boycott, consumers boycott products from Israeli companies. A primary consumer boycott works in two ways: firstly by generating bad publicity for the offender and secondly by applying economic pressure for change. There are a range of Israeli products currently on sale in UK supermarkets. Much of the produce on sale has been grown on confiscated Palestinian lands.



Whilst many Israeli products will be marked as such through the country of origin label, others will not. Products labelled in Israel will be preceded by the numbers **729** on the barcode, so this can be used as a helpful, but not definitive guide.



In addition to making the personal choice not to buy Israeli produce, trade unionists can decide, both individually and collectively to send a letter to the supermarket informing them of the decision to boycott and asking them to de-shelve Israeli products. For further details on how to organise a targeted supermarket campaign go to [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine).

## Some common Israeli producers and products

- **Tivall** (Sainsbury's Meatfree Hot Dog Sausages and Vegetarian Sausages)
- **Carmel** (West Bank) (Organic Fruit and Veg sold in most Supermarkets)
- **Tomer** (West Bank) (Organic Fruit and Veg sold in most Supermarkets)
- **Beigel and Beigel** (West Bank) (Sweets and Pretzels etc)
- **Agri-ver/Flowersdirect** (West Bank) strawberries and other berries, cut herbs, pomegranates, figs, peppers, passion fruit, plums, carrots, cut melons, cut mangos.

## Don't Boycott Kosher products

The STUC recognises the place of Israeli goods, such as kosher products, in Jewish religious observance, and wishes to ensure that a consumer boycott is targeted so that it does not affect, as far as practicable, religious observance.

### What trade union organisations can do

- Contact members and circulate materials explaining how a personal consumer boycott can be undertaken
- Organise leafleting outside supermarkets making the case for boycott
- Write to supermarkets informing them of the decision to boycott and asking them to de-shelve Israeli products. Mailing and email addresses for some of the major UK supermarkets stocking Israeli goods can be found at [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine)

**Agrexco Agricultural Export Company Ltd.** Markets most of Israel's exports of fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers, some of which are grown in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. In a court case in November of 2004, the General Manager of Agrexco UK at that time, Amos Orr, testified that Agrexco markets 60-70% of the agricultural produce grown in Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. Agrexco products are most commonly branded as Carmel.



## Products from illegal Israeli settlements

All major UK retailers sell Israeli goods, and most of them sell produce from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. It is particularly important that such products are subject to boycott.

Tesco, Sainsbury's and Waitrose all sell products from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, many of which are exported by Carmel Agrexco. ASDA has made several statements denying that it stocks goods in its stores from the 'West Bank' (i.e. settlement goods). However, ASDA's position is not unequivocal it recently stated that "On the sourcing of products from overseas we are always guided by the position of the UK Government and by the European Union on trade policy."

In 2007, Marks and Spencer decided not to stock settlement produce because its supply chain management system means that it must be able to visit every production site, and it could not guarantee the safety of its staff within the West Bank, Golan Heights or Gaza. The Co-op (now incorporating Somerfield) stated that "the Co-operative Group does not source primary produce from illegal West Bank settlements, and is actively progressing the removal of the very small amount present as ingredients in own-brand composite products."

### ***What's on the label?***

Some products will carry the words "produce of the West Bank". In all likelihood such produce is in fact from illegal settlements.



The vast majority, and very probably, all produce labelled from the West Bank, comes from the settlements. Very little, if any, produce that comes

from Palestinian farms makes it to supermarkets in the UK.

### ***What can you do?***

Write to your local supermarket asking them about their labelling policy for items of Israeli/Palestinian provenance. Urge them not to stock produce of the Occupation and inform them that it is their duty to ensure that their produce is accurately labelled.

### **DON'T BUY**

#### ***Ahava Dead Sea Cosmetics***

*Ahava manufactures cosmetic products using minerals from the Dead Sea. The company has a factory and a visitors' center in the Israeli settlement of Mitzpe Shalem in the occupied West Bank. It sells packaged Dead Sea mud excavated in the occupied area of the Dead Sea shore, next to Kalia settlement. Despite manufacturing its cosmetics in the occupied West Bank, Ahava labels its skin care products imported into the EU as originating from "The Dead Sea, Israel."*

### **DO BUY**

#### ***Sindyanna of Galilee***

*Sindyanna of Galilee markets Palestinian olive products on the principles of fair trade and joined IFAT in 2003. Its many products include Dead Sea mud soap.*

*For more details go to [www.hadeel.org/](http://www.hadeel.org/)*

## Collective Boycott

The purpose of a collective boycott is to transmit pressure through companies to persuade the Israeli government to alter its behaviour and obey international law. As such it is legitimate to boycott companies which operate in Scotland and are wholly or partly Israeli owned.

### Eden Springs



STUC decided in 2009 to change its water supplier. Eden Springs UK Ltd is entirely owned, managed and controlled by Eden Springs Ltd/Mayanot Eden, an Israeli company that uses water stolen from a spring in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights. Eden Springs UK sources their water locally. However STUC will no longer use Eden Springs because its parent company Eden Springs Ltd operates in the Golan Heights, territory illegally occupied by Israel, where it uses the water resources for profit. Eden Springs has contracts in the public and private sector including supplying water coolers to local councils and health authorities.

#### What trade union organisations can do:

- Identify whether your workplace has a contract with Eden Springs
- Lobby Eden Springs to urge it to withdraw all operations from the occupied Golan Heights
- Contact relevant management advising of your view that an alternative supplier should be found. Be clear that you are not asking them to break an existing contract but that no new contract should be negotiated.

### Cultural Boycotts

Cultural collaboration boosts Israel's image on the international stage. By refusing to participate in cultural exchanges and cooperative projects, artists and cultural institutions can send a clear message to the Israeli establishment that their illegal occupation, and discrimination against Palestinians, are unacceptable. Academic boycotts, conducted within the law and in the spirit of equal rights to academic freedom for Palestinians, could have a significant impact on institutions of higher education and research - which covet international respectability while remaining silent about, or complicit in, the illegal occupation and the oppression of Palestinians.

#### *Aims*

- To argue for artists and cultural institutions to refuse to collaborate in exchange programmes with, and performances in, Israel.
- Where performances, film screenings and other visits by Israelis are scheduled in Scotland, to use the occasion to draw public attention to the illegal occupation and the apartheid system in Israel.
- To highlight to Israeli academics and academic institutions that collaboration with the occupation and discrimination against Palestinians is unacceptable to the international academic community.
- To encourage links where possible between individuals and institutions in Scotland and Palestinian universities, and artistic exchanges with Palestinians.

We are calling on British companies and shareholders to disinvest from Israel and, in particular, to target both Israeli, British and multi-national companies which are complicit with the illegal occupation. Civil society organisations such as trade unions, women's institutes, ethical trading groups and co-ops, should scrutinise their investments and pension funds, to make sure they are not implicated in supporting Israel. The withdrawal of corporate foreign investments can be complemented by individual shareholders taking their investments away from Israeli companies and companies which benefit Israel.

### Under the spotlight - Caterpillar



As a direct supplier of bulldozers to the Israeli army for military use, Caterpillar has attracted particular criticism for its role in supporting the Occupation. UN Special Rapporteur Jean Ziegler complained to Caterpillar's chief executive Jim Owens in May 2004 that Israeli forces were "using armoured bulldozers supplied by your company to destroy agricultural farms, greenhouses, ancient olive groves and agricultural fields planted with crops, as well as numerous Palestinian homes and sometimes human lives".

Nevertheless, Caterpillar continues to sell its D9 and D10

bulldozers to Israel where they are militarized and used to bulldoze homes, uproot olive trees, build the Apartheid Wall, and kill civilians. In addition to constituting violations of international law, of the US Arms Export Control Act and of its own corporate code of conduct, Caterpillar is playing a special role in strengthening Israeli Apartheid and perpetuating injustice against Palestinians.

### Veolia

The Veolia parent company is Veolia Environnement, a French multinational. Veolia Transport, a subsidiary of Veolia Environnement, is a leading partner in the CityPass consortium, contracted to build a light rail tramway system linking west Jerusalem to illegal

*In the UK, the Churches have given the moral lead in the divestment campaign. The Methodist Conference has referred the matter to its Joint Advisory Committee for Ethical Investment and the equivalent committee of the Church of England has recommended divestment from Caterpillar. This position has been ratified by the General Synod.*

Jewish settlements such as Pisgat Ze'ev, French Hill, Neve Ya'akov and Gilo in occupied east Jerusalem. Once built, the rail system will help to cement Israel's hold on occupied east Jerusalem and tie the settlements even more firmly into the State of Israel.

*In November 2006, ASN, a Dutch bank, broke off financial relations with Veolia on account of the light rail contract. Veolia also runs Luas, Dublin's light rail system, but has been forced by Trade Union pressure in Ireland to cancel a proposed deal to train drivers and engineers for the Jerusalem light rail.*

Veolia Environmental Services runs waste collection and recycling for several local authorities in the UK and so provides a local target for appropriate action. It is clear from the parent company's annual reports and website that the company is one coherent whole and so the misconduct of one division is the misconduct of the whole.

## Which companies to disinvest from?

Companies with direct links to direct actors in Israeli crimes are the obvious target for disinvestment, but disinvestment from Israel as a whole can send a message to the Israeli society that individuals and organisations around the world are no longer prepared either to bankroll the occupation, discrimination and expulsion of the Palestinian people. Initially, STUC favours targeted disinvestment campaigns aimed at companies directly complicit with the illegal occupation. Consideration of complicity with human rights abuses and/or international illegality are legitimate grounds for refusing to invest in a company.

A list of complicit companies is published by the Coalition of Women for Peace on the website [www.whoprofits.org/](http://www.whoprofits.org/)

## What trade union organisations can do

- Scrutinise your own organisation's pension scheme and other investment funds to ensure they do not support companies investing in Israel
- Ensure that union representatives acting as workplace pension trustees scrutinise employer/employee pension funds and argue for disinvestment
- Lobby local and national organisations to adopt disinvestment strategies

## *What information are you looking for?*

When you contact the relevant investment or pension fund manager you should ask for copies of the Fund's:

- **Investment strategy.** This should provide an overview of the approach towards investment and should include the different types of assets invested in and the proportion of the Fund invested in each. The strategy will probably state that the Fund's main obligation is to act in the best financial interests of the members of the Funds. This does not preclude it having a responsible investment policy.

- **Responsible Investment policy.** This should outline the Fund's approach to responsible investment and may enable the Fund to work alongside other investors to influence companies on issues which are consistent with the Funds' fiduciary responsibilities. Many Responsible Investment policies will make clear that the Fund is signed up to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investment. But it should not be assumed that this means that the Fund is not investing in companies complicit with the Occupation and illegal settlements.

- **List of shareholdings.** Some funds will publish a list of current investments and shareholdings. Those of public bodies can often be accessed on the world wide web. Other funds will be less forthcoming but shareholders should insist on seeing an up to date list of investments.

For more information on how to promote a disinvestment campaign go to [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine)

*The Norwegian Ministry of Finance has excluded the Israeli company Elbit Systems Ltd. from the Government Pension Fund – Global, on the basis of the Council on Ethics' recommendation. The Council on Ethics has found that investment in Elbit constitutes an unacceptable risk of contribution to serious violations of fundamental ethical norms as a result of the company's integral involvement in Israel's construction of a separation barrier on occupied land.*



The role of the British public can be crucial in pushing for different forms of sanctions against Israel, within a variety of campaigns. These encompass trade, oil, military, travel and diplomatic sanctions, which can be implemented from the local level, on a national scale, within the EU and across the wider international community.

### Trade Sanctions

Mutual trade with the UK and EU should be subjected to sanctions. The Israeli economy is particularly reliant on the EU for both imports and exports markets, in the sectors of services and technology, arms, diamonds and fresh produce. The application of sanctions would increase the burden on the economy and place significant pressure on Israel to implement international law and the rights of the Palestinian people. The suspension of the EU-Israel Trade Agreement, for Israel's breaches of human rights clauses, is a priority within solidarity work in the UK. Write to the Foreign Secretary and MEPs. See sample letters at [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine)

### Diplomatic sanctions

Israel's acceptance into the United Nations was conditional on its acceptance and implementation of UN Resolution 194. This resolution affirms the right of all Palestinians to return to their homes and lands from where they were exiled in 1948, requires Israel to compensate for losses, and stipulates that Palestinians must be compensated and relocated should they choose not to return to their communities. Israel refuses to abide by this resolution along with many others.

Diplomatic links including relations on an official level, participation in external forums and networks and meetings between state representatives should be suspended. This should exclude UN sanctioned negotiations on peace and the future of Israel/Palestine.

### Military Sanctions

Israel's military industry is unusual compared to other states in that production is geared towards external markets, bringing in vital investment for the economy. Israel has a shortfall in domestic production and imports military goods from the US and some EU states (often with financial assistance).

A sanctions campaign looks to cut off an important sector of the Israeli economy, which has caused mini weapons races across the world, fuelled various conflicts and assisted various regimes, dictators and juntas. It also seeks to halt the arming of Israel where it is unable to source military goods domestically and end the global complicity in Israeli crimes against Palestinians.

### What trade union organisations can do

- Lobby MPs who are supported by your union to speak out in favour of sanctions on Israel.
- Contact your local MP by letter or by visiting their surgery.
- Undertake appropriate campaigning activities such as holding a public meeting or leafleting.

## Solidarity and Practical Support

In addition to undertaking targeted BDS campaigns, Scottish unions are actively working to promote positive links with their counterparts in Palestine through providing practical assistance to their brothers and sisters.

### Fire Brigades Union and the Nablus Firefighters

After 9 months of fundraising and organising the Fire Brigades Union in Scotland was able to welcome 8 firefighters from Nablus, Palestine. Nablus has a population of approx 300,000 and has 72 firefighters.



For three weeks from October through to November 2009 the 8 members of the Nablus Fire Department were in Scotland to receive intensive training. This consisted of two weeks at the Fire Service College at Gullane, then one week based in Dundee (twin city to Nablus). This was followed by a further week training in Manchester.



At the end of the programme the firefighters returned to Nablus to become training instructors for the Fire Department.

The visit was co-ordinated by FBU Scotland and was supported by the Scottish Government, SFSC Gullane, Lothian & Borders FRS, Tayside FRS and many others.

[http://www.fbuscotland.org/officials/nablus\\_firefighters.htm](http://www.fbuscotland.org/officials/nablus_firefighters.htm)

### Supporting Palestinian Education



UCU organised two seminars for representatives of UCU branches and local associations, on twinning and exchanges with Palestinian educators and researchers. The seminars allowed participants to share experiences and good practice, with the aim of encouraging further twinning between UCU branches and

developing a wider range of potential partnerships. In particular the seminars examined

- institutional links (eg, college to college, university to university, etc)
- 'union to union' links; and
- community twinning and exchanges.

UCU and other unions also supports the Friends of Bir Zeit University [www.fobzu.org](http://www.fobzu.org)

***The Right to Education Campaign*** is engaged in activities in Palestine and worldwide through a growing international network of support. Driven by academics and students in Palestine, the Campaign's activities are a defense against the denial of the right to education under Israeli military occupation. Affiliation to the Right to Education Campaign includes a subscription to the bi-monthly *Right to Education Bulletin*.

<http://right2edu.birzeit.edu/>

## UNISON and the PGFTU

In mid-2008 the TUC launched an appeal for funding for a series of capacity-building projects to be run by the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU). UNISON agreed to fund a project on “Strengthening Workers Awareness of their Rights” and this project, along with the others, has been running for approximately a year.

About 20 union members attended a course on the election and duties of workplace reps.

UNISON is currently discussing the extension of this project as well as other proposals including supporting the PGFTU Health Services Federation.



## Positive Purchasing

We urge you to consider purchasing **Zaytoun products**. Zaytoun olive oil is 100% produced by an independent cooperative of Palestinian farmers in the occupied West Bank. With no funds for marketing, these farmers have worked over the last few years, against the odds, to build up a customer base in Britain. They have to confront major obstacles created by the Israeli occupation and closure policies. They have slowly been making inroads into UK health food shops, charity outlets and the occasional supermarket. They depend mainly on groups of committed human rights activists, of all faiths and of none, personally canvassing potential outlets and selling bottles of oil to individual supporters. The list of suppliers can be found on their website [www.zaytoun.org](http://www.zaytoun.org)



**Hadeel** is a Fair Trade shop which aims to provide a sustainable source of income for craftspeople working with social enterprises in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, as well as one in the Galilee and another in the Negev. Its work also helps to sustain infrastructures, as many of the producer groups also provide health, education and emergency services in their communities which lack any form of local government which might do this. Hadeel is a sister shop to Sunbula which is at St. Andrew's Church, Jerusalem, and work closely with Zaytoun in the UK. Hadeel produce can be located at their website [www.hadeel.org](http://www.hadeel.org)

### [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine)

All of the documents within this pack are held at [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine). The site will build a range of additional resources such as model letters and print quality pdfs for leaflets.

### [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvBJCmHJS4g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvBJCmHJS4g)

Short film on the STUC's fact finding mission to Israel and Palestine in March 2009.

### [www.bdsmovement.net/](http://www.bdsmovement.net/)

The website of the global BDS movement contains a wide range of resources for those wishing to pursue campaigns

### [www.bigcampaign.org/](http://www.bigcampaign.org/)

The Boycott Israeli Goods Campaign

### [www.palestinecampaign.org/](http://www.palestinecampaign.org/)

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign

### [www.scottishpsc.org.uk/](http://www.scottishpsc.org.uk/)

The Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

### **Scottish Friends of Palestine**

[info@scottish-friends-of-palestine.org](mailto:info@scottish-friends-of-palestine.org)

### <http://sjjp.org.uk/>

Scottish Jews for a just peace

### [www.waronwant.org](http://www.waronwant.org)

War on Want fights poverty in developing countries in partnership with people affected by globalisation. It campaigns for human rights and against the root causes of global poverty, inequality and injustice. Download the report *Profiting from the Occupation* at this site.

### [www.alhaq.org/](http://www.alhaq.org/)

Al-Haq is an independent Palestinian non-governmental human rights organisation based in Ramallah, West Bank. Established in 1979 to protect and promote human rights and the rule of law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), the organisation has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

### <http://www.btselem.org/English/>

The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories was established in 1989 by a group of prominent academics, attorneys, journalists, and Knesset members. It endeavors to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories, combat the phenomenon of denial prevalent among the Israeli public, and help create a human rights culture in Israel

### <http://coalitionofwomen.org/home/english/>

Coalition of Women for Peace

### [www.whoprofits.org](http://www.whoprofits.org)

Coalition of Women for Peace subsite identifying companies which profit from the Occupation

### [www.easi-pisi.org](http://www.easi-pisi.org)

Palestine Israel Ethical Shopping Initiative



## Appendix 2 - Israeli companies operating in settlements

A total of 27 Israeli companies operating in settlements and exporting to the United Kingdom have been identified:

- Fruit, vegetables and fresh herbs: Agrexco, Arava, Flowers Direct, Hadiklaim, Mehadrin Tnuport Export
- Other food products: Abady Bakery, Achdut, Adumim Food Additives/Frutarom, Amnon & Tamar, Oppenheimer, Shamir Salads
- Beverages: Adanim Tea, Soda-Club, Tishbi Estate Winery
- Cosmetics: Dead Sea Laboratories, Intercosma
- Pharmaceuticals: Fermentek
- Plastic products: Keter Plastic, Tip Top Toys, Twitoplast
- Metal products: DiSTeK, Mul-T-Lock, Yardeni Locks
- Textile products: Caesarea Carpets, Dispobud, Ofertex
- Other products: Greenkote

In most cases these companies export products produced in settlements in the occupied territories to the United Kingdom, sometimes mixed with products from Israel proper. In some cases the exported products are produced solely in Israel, but the company is listed here as it has a major office or factory in the settlements.

For 25 of these 27 companies a total of 51 British trading partners were found: 12 British marketing subsidiaries of the Israeli companies concerned and 39 British importers and retailers (see paragraph 3.12). Fruit and vegetables exported by these settlement companies are sold by major UK high street retailers, such as Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Somerfield. Other products exported by settlement companies are sold by well-known British retail chains, such as Marks & Spencer (M&S), John Lewis and B&Q.

The following British companies sell products from more than one Israeli company linked to the Israeli settlements in the West Bank:

- Just Kosher is linked to six companies: Abadi Bakery, Achdut, Adanim Tea, Amnon & Tamar, Oppenheimer, Shamir Salads.
- Tesco is linked to four companies: Arava, Hadiklaim, Mehadrin-Tnuport, Soda-Club.
- Sainsbury's is linked to two companies: Hadiklaim, Soda-Club.
- John Lewis (including its supermarket division Waitrose) is linked to two companies: Ahava, Hadiklaim
- Argos is linked to two companies: Keter Plastic, Soda-Club.

### **Other British business links with the occupied territories**

Three British companies with investments in settlements in territories occupied by Israel have been identified:

- Hanson UK is a supplier of heavy building materials to the construction industry. It has a subsidiary in Israel which owns factories and quarries in the West Bank. Hanson UK was acquired in September 2007 by German company HeidelbergCement.
- British Israel Investment is an Israeli property company owning a shopping mall in Maaleh Adumim, a settlement in the occupied West Bank. The major shareholder of British Israel Investment is the British businessman Leo Noë, the executive chairman of F&C REIT Asset Management.
- Unilever is a major Anglo-Dutch food, detergent and personal care company which owns a 51% share in Beigel & Beigel, a pretzel and snacks factory located in a settlement in the occupied West Bank. Unilever recently announced that it will sell its stake in Beigel & Beigel.

Taken from page ii-iii of <http://www.soas.ac.uk/lawpeacemideast/file49531.pdf>

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 At STUC Congress 2007 a resolution requested the General Council explore the calls for boycott, disinvestments and sanctions (BDS) against the state of Israel until it complied with universal law and international principles of human rights. Since this resolution was carried the General Council has given careful and urgent consideration to the BDS calls. The STUC has consulted with its affiliates, considered the implications of BDS, discussed BDS with its stakeholders and invited views and comments from interested groups and communities. In March 2009 a delegation from the General Council visited Palestine and Israel. This enabled the STUC to speak directly with trade unionists in Palestine and Israel, to discuss the BDS calls with them, and to see the situation in the region ourselves.
- 1.2 This report explains the process undertaken by the General Council in exploring the BDS calls. It then makes a recommendation on behalf of the General Council. This recommendation is for consideration by the STUC's Annual Congress on 22 April 2009.

### **2 The Boycott, Disinvestments and Sanctions Discussion**

- 2.1 The General Council has given serious consideration over the past couple of years to the issue of boycott, disinvestments and sanctions against Israel until it complies with international principles of human rights and international laws, such as the Geneva Conventions and United Nations Security Council resolutions. In September 2007 the General Council agreed a process for exploring the BDS calls, which included developing a greater understanding of BDS and achieving its stated aims; establishing the position of the Palestine General Federation of Trade Unions; seeking the views of STUC affiliates, the wider trade union movement, as well as other stakeholders; and seeking the views of Histadrut on this matter. A report on the progress with this work was given to Congress in April 2008. A motion to Congress 2008 on BDS (which was remitted), and questions to the General Council, underlined the urgency with which Congress wished this matter to be addressed.
- 2.2 The General Council undertook to participate in a delegation to Palestine and Israel as part of the deliberations on BDS. This delegation provided vital information and experiences which have contributed to the conclusions drawn by the General Council. A formal consultation with stakeholders provided invaluable comments and views, and has helped to shape the final decision and the campaign that the General Council wishes to pursue on this matter.

### **3 STUC Delegation to Palestine and Israel**

- 3.1 A delegation from the General Council visited Palestine and Israel between 28 February – 7 March 2009. The delegation consisted of eleven senior trade unionists, including the General Secretary, General Council members, and Scottish trade union leaders. A full report from the is available on the STUC's website, and from Congress Office.

- 3.2 The delegation saw for themselves the growing Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, the separation wall, the checkpoints and the restrictions on movement. The delegation also saw the poverty in Palestine, and a refugee camp in East Jerusalem. On a visit to Sderot, on the border with Gaza, the delegation saw how the rocket attacks affect the lives of Israelis.
- 3.3 The delegation heard a similar message from the leadership of Histadrut, Israel's Welfare Minister Yitzchak Hertzog, the Foreign Affairs Officials, and from the Sderot Municipal representative. This message was of the importance of dialogue, the constructive relationship between Histadrut and the PGFTU, and the key problem that Israel does not have a partner in Palestine to work with for peace. Hamas was derided as a terrorist organisation which was operated from Iran, and which did not recognise Israel's right to exist. There was a failure to recognise that Palestinians had supported Hamas in democratic elections. There was no attempt to try to comprehend why some Palestinians would vote for an extreme and violent organisation.
- 3.4 The delegation heard of attacks on human rights of Palestinians from many organisations including human rights organisations Al-Haq and B'Tselem, the campaign group Breaking the Silence, the trade unionists at Birzeit University, the BDS campaign in Ramallah, the International Labour Organisation, as well as from the PGFTU.
- 3.5 The PGFTU told the delegation that the decision on BDS is one for organisations like the STUC to take for themselves. Other groups including the Palestine Women's General Federation, and the BZT Union of Professors and Employees strongly encouraged the STUC to support BDS because of the attacks on human rights of Palestinians. The Palestinian Planning Minister within the Ministry of Labour told the delegation that he believed the only way Israel would change its policy towards the Palestinians was if it was isolated from the rest of the world. He also said that most Palestinian workers in Israel are employed in the construction and service sectors, and, therefore, are not working in the sectors which would be primarily targeted by BDS.
- 3.6 B'Tselem told the delegation how the Israeli settlements and the restrictions on movement are at the heart of most human rights violations. The human rights organisation Al-Haq explained that boycott is a personal decision for groups, where as international laws, such as the Geneva Convention, set out that where breaches occur the signatories to legislation have a duty to impose sanctions. Al-Haq itself is involved in pursuing the British Government in UK Courts because of its failure to censure Israel for breaching the Geneva Convention.

#### **4 Views of Affiliates**

- 4.1 The General Council sought views from affiliates on the issue of BDS in January 2008 and again in June 2008. The General Council received responses from six of its affiliates. It is worth noting that a number of those submitting views forwarded resolutions from their own conferences, and that since views have been submitted, subsequent conference resolutions have changed or added to these policy positions.

- 4.2 A number of these responses clearly supported BDS, one opposed BDS, and another explained that it had legal advice stating it was not within the union's power to call for or implement a boycott. The STUC's two largest affiliates support some kind of boycotting action. A report on the responses is available at [www.stuc.org.uk/palestine](http://www.stuc.org.uk/palestine)

## **5 Consultation with Interested Parties**

- 5.1 The General Council sought views from a number of groups and organisations who have an interest in the issue of BDS in January 2009. Helpful submissions were received from organisations and faith groups which addressed a number of issues including:

- human rights,
- the peace process,
- the potential impact of BDS on the economies of Israel and Palestine,
- the relationship between Histadrut and the PGFTU,
- comparisons with apartheid South Africa,
- the impact of BDS upon communities in Scotland,
- Anti-Semitism,
- the debate on the breadth or not of the call for BDS,
- views on the targets of BDS,
- the role of the STUC.

- 5.2 A report analysing the views of interested parties is attached at Appendix B.

- 5.3 Whilst not part of the formal consultation with interested groups and organisations, it is worth recording that the STUC engaged in informal dialogue with representatives of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Scotland. The purpose of this discussion was to consider any issues for the STUC in taking a decision to call for BDS, in terms of equality and human rights laws in Scotland and the UK. The advice received emphasised the importance of taking a rights based approach, and balancing the human rights of the different groups affected in this debate.

## **6 General Council Recommendation**

- 6.1 The General Council is recommending that Congress should take a position of:

- supporting boycotts and disinvestments against Israel,
- calling for sanctions against Israel,
- encouraging positive investments in the occupied territories.

- 6.2 The General Council is recommending this action because of Israel's attacks on the human rights of Palestinian people, and its failure to comply with agreed international law. The STUC strongly supports a peaceful two state solution in Palestine and Israel. It is deeply disappointed at the failure of negotiation and diplomacy to achieve the two state solution to date. By taking the position of supporting boycott and disinvestments and by calling for sanctions, the STUC hopes to bring economic, political and social pressure on the government of Israel and the world's powers,



to reach a peaceful solution through dialogue. The STUC also intends to draw greater attention to the fact that international human rights laws are being violated by Israel.

- 6.3 In reaching this decision, the STUC has considered the views and comments of significant groups of people, not least the people of Palestine whose human rights are infringed on a daily basis. We are very clear that our position is taken because of the actions of the Israeli state. However, the STUC wants to do all that it can to ensure that our decision does not impact detrimentally upon communities in Scotland. We envisage a targeted consumer led boycott, where trade union members should not put their own jobs at risk by refusing to deal with Israeli products, or work with organisations that are involved in the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Rather, these trade union members have a campaigning role, in working with their employers to raise greater awareness of the issues and the case for boycott. The campaign will encourage trade unionists to boycott goods and especially agricultural products that have been produced in the illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories. The STUC recognises the place of Israeli goods, such as kosher products, in Jewish religious observance, and wishes to ensure that a consumer boycott is targeted so that it does not affect, as far as practicable, religious observance.
- 6.4 The campaign should develop and encourage a greater awareness of organisations' investments and interests in companies which are supporting the occupation. The STUC is particularly encouraging campaigns of disinvestment (or divesting) in companies associated with the occupation.
- 6.5 Publicly calling for sanctions against Israel for its breaches of international laws and human rights violations is an important element of the campaign. Sanctions are a valid action imposed upon a party or nation where it has breached agreed rules. The STUC will raise the matter with the British Government, impressing upon them their obligations as signatories of the Geneva Conventions, and as United Nations Security Council members. The sanctions campaign, in pressurising the British Government, European Union institutions, and other nations, is vital to protect the integrity of agreed international laws and to uphold the rights of victims of human rights abuses.
- 6.6 The STUC acknowledges its relationship with both PGFTU and Histadrut and supports the development of a constructive dialogue between them. The STUC will explain its position on BDS to Histadrut, and will, over the next 12 months, raise with them Histadrut positions in relation to Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The STUC will review its relationship with Histadrut in this context.
- 6.7 Whilst recognising this paper and recommendation is a starting point for this campaign within the STUC, the General Council acknowledges the urgency of the situation facing Palestinian people. To ensure that the campaign is effective, and to make this decision meaningful for trade union members in Scotland, and appropriate for particular workplaces, the STUC and affiliates will need to take forward further work and activity. The General Council urges Congress to support a continual awareness raising process on these issues, to provide guidance and support to affiliates, and to ensure that a BDS campaign, along with positive investment in the Palestinian territories, is effective.