

The BDS Movement

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS) is a global campaign against Israel. It is the newest weapon in the ongoing effort to eliminate Israel and deny the Jewish people their right to self-determination. BDS brands itself as a progressive human rights movement, but nothing could be further from the truth. In reality, BDS undermines hopes for peace, justice, and human rights in the region.

“the real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel... Justice and freedom for Palestinians are incompatible with the existence of the state of Israel.” - As’ad Abukhalil, leading BDS activist¹

BDS is bigoted. It calls for the elimination Israel and the violation of Jewish rights.

- BDS co-founder Omar Barghouti has said, “we oppose a Jewish state” and many other leading BDS activists have made similar statements.² Norman Finkelstein, an infamous critic of Israel, has stated that BDS is “not really talking about rights. They’re talking about [how] they want to destroy Israel.”³
- One of the BDS movement’s three central demands is, a “right of return” to Israel for millions of Palestinian refugees. If millions of Palestinians move to Israel, Israel will be replaced with a Palestinian state. This would violate international law and the rights of the Jewish people to self-determination.⁴
- As a minority in a Palestinian state, Israeli Jews would likely be forced to live under the rule of racist political parties. Fatah and Hamas are the forces that dominate Palestinian politics today, and both regularly express or promote hatred of Jews and Israelis.⁵

BDS is discriminatory.

- BDS singles out Israel alone for boycotts while ignoring the world’s worst human rights violators. Israel is the only free country in the Middle East, with a record comparable to that of other liberal democracies.⁶ In the words of *NYT* columnist Thomas Friedman, “criticizing Israel is not anti-Semitic, and saying so is vile. But singling out Israel for opprobrium and international sanction... is anti-Semitic, and not saying so is dishonest.”⁷

BDS undermines peace efforts between Israel and the Palestinians.

- BDS condemns groups that promote dialogue and coexistence between ordinary Israelis and Palestinians.⁸
- BDS places all pressure to end the conflict on Israel, while failing to hold Palestinian leaders accountable for promoting hatred, incitement, and terrorism. Palestinian leaders have no incentive to negotiate in good faith if they think the world will pressure Israel into giving them everything they want.
- Many companies targeted by BDS promote coexistence, hiring both Israeli and Palestinian employees.⁹

BDS hurts ordinary Palestinians.

- Noam Chomsky, one of Israel’s harshest critics, has accused BDS of calling for “the destruction of Israel,” and said that “if you really hate the Palestinians, [BDS] is a good step because it’s going to harm them.”¹⁰
- Almost 100,000 Palestinians work in Israel and Israeli settlements in the West Bank.¹¹ On average, they earn twice as much as Palestinians who work in the Palestinian Authority, and for many the difference in wages is even higher.¹² These workers support thousands of other Palestinians financially.¹³
- Many Palestinian farmers rely on Israeli companies such as Agrexco to export their goods to European markets.¹⁴ Agrexco has exported hundreds of tons of Palestinian produce from Gaza since 2010.¹⁵

BDS is not new. Extremists have been calling for anti-Jewish, anti-Israel boycotts since the 1930s.

- The Palestinian Arab Executive Committee, led by Nazi collaborator Haj Amin al-Husseini, called for a boycott against Jews in the British-controlled Palestine Mandate in 1933.¹⁶ Arab nations imposed boycotts against pre-state Israel in 1945, and expanded them when Israel was established in 1948.¹⁷ Arab officials clearly stated that the goal of those boycotts was the “liquidation of Israel”.¹⁸ BDS is a continuation of that destructive agenda.

- ¹ As'ad AbuKhalil, "A Critique of Norman Finkelstein on BDS," February 17, 2012, at <http://english.al-akhbar.com/blogs/angry-corner/critique-norman-finkelstein-bds>
- ² John Y. Jones, "Omar Barghouti - Strategies for Change," *Vimeo*, September 2013, at <https://vimeo.com/75201955>; Ahmed Moor, "BDS is a long term project with radically transformative potential," *Mondoweiss*, April 22, 2010, at <http://mondoweiss.net/2010/04/bds-is-a-long-term-project-with-radically-transformative-potential.html>; Informed Grads, "UAW 2865 BDS Caucus Panel Discussion," Nov. 12, 2014, at http://informedgrads.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/bds_event_transcript.txt
- ³ Norman Finkelstein, "Norman Finkelstein on BDS," *YouTube*, February 15, 2012, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iggdO7C70P8>
- ⁴ BDS Movement, "Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS," July 9, 2005, at <http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," December 16, 1966, at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>
- ⁵ The Avalon Project, "Hamas Covenant 1988," *Yale Law School*, August 18, 1988, at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp;
- ⁶ *Palestinian Media Watch*, "Demonization of Jews/Israelis," 2013, at <http://www.palwatch.org/main.aspx?fi=762>
- ⁷ Freedom House, "Freedom in the World Report 2013," 2013, at <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2013>
- ⁸ Thomas Friedman, "Campus Hypocrisy," *New York Times*, October 16, 2002, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/16/opinion/campus-hypocrisy.html>
- ⁹ Yair Rosenberg, "Talking to Palestinians Who Won't Talk Back," *Tablet Magazine*, September 4, 2013, at <http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/143517/talking-to-palestinians-who-wont-talk-back>
- ¹⁰ The Forward, Haaretz, and Nathan Jeffay, "Palestinian workers praise SodaStream - and Scarlett Johansson," *Haaretz*, February 2, 2014, at <http://www.haaretz.com/news/features/1.571948>; Christa Case Bryant, "Palestinian workers back Scarlett Johansson's opposition to SodaStream boycott," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 30, 2014, at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Security-Watch/2014/0130/Palestinian-workers-back-Scarlett-Johansson-s-opposition-to-SodaStream-boycott-video>; Josh Mitnick, "What SodaStream's Palestinian Employees Think About Scarlett Johansson," *Gawker*, February 1, 2014, at <http://gawker.com/what-sodastreams-palestinian-employees-think-about-sca-1513475552>; Matthew Kalman, "Bursting Oxfam's West Bank Bubble," *Haaretz*, February 3, 2014, at <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/outside-edge/.premium-1.572231>; Naama Ben-Yaakov, "Rivlin Visits Arab and Jewish Workers at the Barkan Industrial Zone," *Indy News Israel*, May 28, 2010 at <http://www.indynewsisrael.com/rivlin-visits-arab-and-jewish-workers-at-the-barkan-industrial-zone>
- ¹¹ Noam Chomsky, "Noam Chomsky Interviewed by Frank Barat, on Israel/Palestine (4/4)," *YouTube*, September 22, 2010, at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5hY-gffV0M>
- ¹² Khaled Abu Toameh, "20,000 Palestinians working in settlements, survey finds," *Jerusalem Post*, August 15, 2013, at <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/20000-Palestinians-working-in-settlements-survey-finds-323222>
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