



Responses to the call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions
This Discussion Paper will cover:

1. The origins of the call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions
2. Definitions - Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions
3. What or who is being targeted?
4. The issues the call raises
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Introduction

In 2009, a group of QCEA Council Members, together with the two Joint Representatives, visited Israel and Palestine on a study trip of 10 days. They were 10 very packed days during which we saw much, met with a large number of people both in Israel and in Palestine and from a variety of backgrounds. We came back, convinced that the EU, the EU Member States and the citizens of those countries have a significant role in the region which justifies a decision for QCEA to work on these matters.

The minute with which the QCEA Council agreed to this programme work reads in part:

It is clear to all of us that the situation is an incredibly complex one, with tremendous suffering of all people involved in the conflict playing a great role. Thus it is clear to us that it is impossible to impose a solution for this conflict from outside. (QCEA Council Minute 2009/20 (part); 24 October 2009)

This discussion paper is part of that programme of work. It recognises that as Friends we are not bystanders in this conflict; there are Friends in Palestine who live the conflict every day; Friends have had a presence in Palestine for well over 100 years and through the Meeting, the Friends Schools in Ramallah, the work and presence of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) for many years, the Am'ari Play Centre and the kindergartens supported by Quaker Service Norway; as consumers, we have to make daily decisions about our purchases of goods which may have been produced in illegal settlements. Many of the issues raised by the call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions demand of us that we make decisions which are difficult both because the information we have is not always as full and as useful as we might wish and because the decisions would be difficult even if we had the fullest information possible.

Friends in the West Bank have called on us to act: **'We ask Friends to consider adopting boycott, divestment and sanctions as we may be led to do, individually or corporately.'**¹ (See below for a fuller quote).

¹ Friends International Centre Ramallah, accessed 1 September 2010, available at: http://www.ramallahquakers.org/pdfs/10-april-FICR_consultation_epistle.pdf (emphasis added)

Clearly, QCEA is not in a position to make any statement on this issue on behalf of Friends. This discussion paper is not intended to be such a statement. QCEA has recognised, however, that a discussion about the call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions would be useful to Friends: to QCEA, because it would assist us in understanding where Friends are on this subject and the extent to which there is a Quaker position; and for other Friends, because it would allow a Quaker position to be developed if such a position is possible.

We offer this paper to assist with this discussion.

The Origins of the Call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions

The Political Background

A discussion paper of this length cannot expect to set out the full political background to the call for boycott, divestment and sanctions. However, this call must be seen against the backdrop of a long history of the conflict in the Middle East and in particular between Israel and the Palestinian population.

It is over 60 years since large numbers of Palestinians were displaced from their homes, villages and towns. A brief comparison of the land owned by Jewish and Palestinian land owners (and after 1947 owned by Israel and belonging to the Palestinian Territories respectively) shows that Palestinians have lost control over significant parts of what was originally their land. The maps (see appendix 1) show this graphically but only cover the period up to 2000. The continued expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank since then has worsened the situation from the perspective of the Palestinians.

The continued expansion of settlements and the construction of the Barrier Wall can be seen as obstacles to a peaceful solution to the conflict because they make a two-state solution less and less likely or possible.

The reality in the region is that there is a significant disparity of power between the Israeli Government on the one hand and the Palestinian Authority on the other.

The calls for boycott, divestment and sanctions are based on a perception that an economic response to those who make the occupation of the Palestinian Territories possible is a last chance for a nonviolent push for change.

There are many organisations, groups and individuals who support this call. There are those who don't. This paper cannot hope to cover all the different positions. However, it may be worth noting here that there is information about the position of Trade Unions (mainly but not exclusively UK based) available at the following website: <http://www.bigcampaign.org/index.php?page=trade-unions-and-boycott>.

Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI) Joint Statement and Call for Action Presented to the 2005 World Social Forum

The OPGAI presented a statement and call for action to the World Social Forum in 2005 in which they called upon global civil society, grassroots movements and NGOs to 'build a broad Israel Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions Campaign inspired by the model of the South-African anti apartheid campaign'²

The nature of the campaign was set out in the call as follows:

Launch new and engage in existing initiatives aimed at *public boycott* (e.g. consumer boycott of Israeli products, non-cooperation with Israeli initiatives in the field of culture, education and sports), *divestment* (e.g. de-investment by private companies and public institutions from Israeli institutions and/or stocks and bonds) and *pressuring governments to impose sanctions* on Israel. Choose initiatives which fit your local environment and link up with similar initiatives worldwide.

² Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI) Joint Statement and Call for Action, accessed 6 July 2010, available at: http://www.jai-pal.org/files/WSF_OPGAI_Statement.pdf

Sabeel Call for Morally Responsible Investment - A Nonviolent Response to the Occupation

Around the same time (though we have not been able to establish an exact date for the publication) Sabeel, the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre in Jerusalem, published a Call for Morally Responsible Investment.³

In this statement, Sabeel set out the faith argument for morally responsible investment:

From the standpoint of faith, we believe that we must recognize and name the evils that are facing the peoples of Israel-Palestine on both sides of the conflict. We must act responsibly under God. God calls us to value all people and stand up for all who are suffering and oppressed regardless of their nationality. Such a stand leads us to responsible stewardship in the investments we make as individuals, churches, institutions and corporations. As Christians we object to all those who carry out violent, unethical, immoral, and illegal actions. We have a God-given responsibility to act. At a minimum, we cannot ourselves participate even indirectly in supporting and enabling unjust policies.

In this context, therefore, we need to consider the following:

- Earning money through investment in companies whose products and services are used in such a way as to violate International Law and human rights is equivalent to profiting from unlawful acts and from the oppression of others.
- Investment in such companies can be seen as condoning the harm of innocent civilians under occupation and the illegal Israeli settlement policies that lead to human rights violations.
- Investment in such companies enables the government of Israel to sustain the ongoing violation of human rights of innocent civilians.
- Continuing such investments, once the facts are brought to our attention, constitutes deliberate condoning of the evil practices.⁴

They also set out the legal arguments based on violations of the Geneva Convention, the ruling of the International Court of Justice ruling on the separation wall in July 2004, and international humanitarian and human rights law.

They make reference to the anti-apartheid movement and quote the then President of the African National Congress Oliver Tambo who said in 1987:

'trade and foreign investment have bolstered the apartheid economy and added to the resources which apartheid State has recklessly wasted in the pursuit of inhuman schemes...Furthermore this trade and investment has enabled the apartheid economy to fund ever increasing expenditure on the State's coercive machinery which is aimed at internal repression and external aggression; and the flow of technology from outside helps to refine that apartheid machinery and make it more efficient...These international connections have helped sustain, and continue to sustain the apartheid system.'⁵

The Bethlehem 'Kairos Palestine' Document

After a long process of discussion and discernment, a group of 15 Palestinian Christian Church leaders issued the 'Kairos Palestine' statement in December 2009. This statement has been signed by over 2000 other Palestinian Christians and endorsed by over 1500 others. The document starts with the following words:

³ Sabeel Call for Morally Responsible Investment, accessed 6 July 2010 at: <http://www.sabeel.org/etemplate.php?id=40>

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 3

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 6

'We, a group of Christian Palestinians, after prayer, reflection and an exchange of opinion, cry out from within the suffering in our country, under the Israeli occupation, with a cry of hope in the absence of all hope, a cry full of prayer and faith in a God ever vigilant, in God's divine providence for all the inhabitants of this land.'⁶

The document refers to boycott and divestment as follows:

Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. The aim is to free both peoples from extremist positions of the different Israeli governments, bringing both to justice and reconciliation. In this spirit and with this dedication we will eventually reach the longed-for resolution to our problems, as indeed happened in South Africa and with many other liberation movements in the world.⁷

We condemn all forms of racism, whether religious or ethnic, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and we call on you to condemn it and oppose it in all its manifestations. At the same time we call on you to say a word of truth and to take a position of truth with regard to Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. As we have already said, we see boycott and disinvestment as tools of non violence for justice, peace and security for all.⁸

Therefore, we call for a response to what the civil and religious institutions have proposed, as mentioned earlier: the beginning of a system of economic sanctions and boycott to be applied against Israel. We repeat once again that this is not revenge but rather a serious action in order to reach a just and definitive peace that will put an end to Israeli occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories and will guarantee security and peace for all.⁹

Definitions: Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions

Boycott

To boycott means to withdraw from commercial or social relations with (a country, organization, or person) as a punishment or protest¹⁰. This can include abstaining from purchasing certain goods or services and abstaining from cultural, academic, sporting, and other social relations.

Individuals, civil society organisations, churches or other religious organisations, companies, local, regional and national governments and international institutions can technically engage in boycott. In the case of the boycott of apartheid South Africa this was very widespread and included governments and international institutions too.

A boycott can be very specific or very broad (i.e. it could affect specific products, whole companies or even the goods, services and activities of a country).

⁶ A moment of truth, Kairos Palestine Document, accessed 6 July 2010, available at:

<http://www.kairospalestine.ps/sites/default/Documents/English.pdf>

⁷ *ibid.*, paragraph 4.2.6, p. 13

⁸ *ibid.*, paragraph 6.3, p. 15

⁹ *ibid.*, paragraph 7, p. 15

¹⁰ Oxford Dictionaries online, accessed 6 July 2010, available at:

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/search?searchType=dictionary&isWritersAndEditors=true&searchUri=All&q=boycott&searchBtn=Search&contentVersion=WORLD>

'Boycotts are unquestionably legal under the common law. The right to engage in commerce, social intercourse, and friendship implies the right not to engage in commerce, social intercourse, and friendship; since a boycott is voluntary and nonviolent, it is unable to be stopped by the law. Opponents of boycotts historically have the choice of suffering under it, yielding to its demands, or attempting to suppress it through extralegal means, such as force and coercion.'¹¹

Divestment

This term means 'the action or process of selling off subsidiary business interests or investments'¹² As with boycott, individuals, civil society organisation, churches or other religious organisations, companies, local, regional and national governments and international institutions can technically engage in it if they have investments or subsidiary business interests in relevant companies.

On the same basis as the argument that boycott is legal under common law, divestment must be similarly legal as ownership of investments or business interests must be by definition voluntary and divestment is a nonviolent process.

Sanctions

Sanctions are 'measures taken by a state to coerce another to conform to an international agreement or norms of conduct, typically in the form of restrictions on trade or official sporting participation'¹³. In other words, it is only governments (or international organisations such as the EU or the UN) who can implement sanctions. Individuals, civil society organisation, churches or other religious organisations, and companies cannot do so, but they can, of course advocate that their government does.

The question of the legality of economic sanctions is rather more complicated. In the case of sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council (UNSC), the UNSC must first be satisfied that 'the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, and if the sanctions are imposed to maintain or restore international peace and security.'¹⁴

Sanctions in situations of armed conflict must further ensure that they do not lead to the starvation of the civilian population, there is humanitarian assistance for civilians, and that there are relief supplies for occupied territories.¹⁵

In terms of policy considerations which will likely inform the decision on whether or not to apply sanctions, the following are of importance:

- The nature of the international wrong that the sanctions are intended to remedy
- The likely effectiveness of the sanctions regime
- The potentially destabilizing effect of the sanctions regime
- The attitude of the population of the target State
- The degree of suffering the sanctions are likely to cause.¹⁶

¹¹ Wikipedia, accessed 6 July 2010, available at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott>

¹² *ibid.*, accessed 6 July 2010 at: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0234230#m_en_gb0234230

¹³ *ibid.*, accessed 6 July 2010 at: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/view/entry/m_en_gb0731810#m_en_gb0731810

¹⁴ Anna Segall, ICRC, Economic Sanctions: legal and policy constraints, accessed 6 July 2010, available at: <http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/57JQ73>

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ *ibid.*

Of course it is not only the UN Security Council but also national governments or other international institutions (such as for example the EU) who can impose sanctions. There are many examples of these. They can be targeted at certain types of trade or can be complete embargos.

In addition to economic or trade sanctions, there can also be sanctions in other spheres, such as participation of a country in cultural, academic and sporting exchanges and the prohibition on key political figures of a particular country to the national territory of the country imposing the sanction.

What or who is being targeted?

The call for boycott, divestment and sanctions is a very broad call and it is important to differentiate in terms of what products, companies, and activities are targeted by different supporters of the call. Here, we set out the range of different applications of boycott, divestment and sanctions that are possible.

Products from the illegal settlements

The first and maybe most obvious target of boycott, divestment and sanctions are products that are imported to third countries that are manufactured in the Israeli settlements in the West Bank which are illegal under international law.

Under the EU-Israel Association Agreement goods are subject to the following:

Article 8

Customs duties on imports and exports, and any charges having equivalent effect, shall be prohibited between the Community and Israel. This shall also apply to customs duties of a fiscal nature.

It has been established – most recently in a judgement by the European Court of Justice of 25 February 2010 – that goods which originate from the illegal settlements are not covered by this Agreement and can therefore not be imported into the EU without appropriate duties. However, these goods still do arrive in the EU (whether with or without appropriate duties being charged depending on the ability of the customs official at the point of entry being able to identify such products as ‘settlement products’ or not).

Individuals, civil society organisations, churches or other religious organisations, companies, local, regional and national governments and international institutions can boycott such goods if they are clearly labelled as settlement goods or, if this is not the case, if there is some other way of identifying them.

The question arises whether the EU should in fact impose a restriction on the import of such goods into the EU. As they are produced in illegal settlements, it is arguable that trading them is also illegal.

All imports from Israel

There are arguments also for boycotting all imports from Israel. There are a number of separate arguments for such a broad boycott:

1. So long as the identification of goods from the illegal settlements is not consistent and it remains difficult therefore to be sure whether products identified as being from Israel are, in fact, from the illegal settlements, it is impossible to undertake a consistent and targeted boycott of products from illegal settlements.
2. The State of Israel benefits through taxes paid by companies exporting goods to third countries, whether or not they come from the illegal settlements. Those revenues contribute to the resources available to the government to support the continued building of illegal settlements, their infrastructure and the roads connecting them to Israeli cities. It is therefore arguable that the purchase of any goods is indirectly supporting the continuation and continued expansion of the illegal settlements.

3. A further argument is that the benefit derived from exports by the Israeli economy contributes to the occupation of the Palestinian Territories and the continued ability of the Israeli Government to fund the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. Therefore, a complete boycott would withdraw financial resources and thus weaken the ability of the Israeli Government to continue the occupation.

There have been calls for the EU to suspend the Association Agreement with Israel because of the continued occupation of the Palestinian Territories. Such a suspension would therefore suspend Article 8; however, it would not prevent imports from Israel into the EU.

Companies that invest in the illegal settlements

The call for boycott, divestment and sanctions does not address itself solely to Israeli companies; the call includes the proposal that companies from other countries which invest in the illegal settlements should also be targeted. These would be companies which support the economic life of the settlements and could include retailers, banks, construction companies, construction supply companies among others. Various organisations supporting the boycott, disinvestments and sanctions campaign have produced information about such companies which can be found on a variety of websites (see Appendix 2).

Companies that support the occupation of the Palestinian Territories

Some companies support the occupation of the Palestinian Territories by supplying materials and other resources to the Israeli Government which assist in the occupation. This would include companies that supply materials for the construction of the Barrier Wall, vehicles that are used in house demolitions, goods and services for the construction of infrastructure which assists the settlement process (such as building transport links between Israeli cities and illegal settlements) and arms and other defence materiel. The call for boycott, divestment and sanctions is also targeting such companies.

Companies that invest in Israeli industry

There are companies outside Israel (both national and multinational companies) which invest in Israeli industry. Again, a distinction can be made between companies that invest in industry in the illegal settlements and those that invest in industry in Israel. These, too, can be targeted through boycott, divestment and sanctions.

The Arms Industry supporting Israel

Friends would not support the arms industry in any event. Whilst for some, specific divestment from companies that produce arms which are exported to Israel is an issue to discuss, Friends would not be in a position to divest from such companies as they would not be investing in them in the first place.

Friends oppose the arms trade in principle and QCEA will continue to raise the specific issue of arms trading between EU Member States and Israel separately from the BDS discussion.

Academic and Cultural Boycott

The call for boycott, divestment and sanctions is not limited to companies; it can also be aimed at academics and culture. There is, first, the issue of cooperation between European and Israeli academic institutions; then there are academic exchanges between European and Israeli academic institutions; and finally, there is the European Security Research Programme specifically, and the European Union Research Framework Programme generally, which Israel is a participant in. On the subject of the European Security Research Programme, QCEA is publishing a separate briefing paper.

In June 2004 a coalition of Palestinian organisations called for such a boycott and specifically 'call(ed) upon our colleagues in the international community to ***comprehensively and consistently boycott all Israeli academic***

and cultural institutions as a contribution to the struggle to end Israel's occupation, colonization and system of apartheid, by applying the following:

1. Refrain from participation in any form of academic and cultural cooperation, collaboration or joint projects with Israeli institutions;
2. Advocate a comprehensive boycott of Israeli institutions at the national and international levels, including suspension of all forms of funding and subsidies to these institutions;
3. Promote divestment and disinvestment from Israel by international academic institutions;
4. Work toward the condemnation of Israeli policies by pressing for resolutions to be adopted by academic, professional and cultural associations and organizations;
5. Support Palestinian academic and cultural institutions directly without requiring them to partner with Israeli counterparts as an explicit or implicit condition for such support.¹⁷

Culture and Sport

A boycott in relation to sports would mean that Israeli sportsmen and women would not be able to participate in international events and that European sportsmen and women would not be able to participate in sporting events in Israel.

The issues the call raises

Does it work?

There are of course many different views on the question of whether boycott, divestment and sanctions as an approach to nonviolent resistance towards a situation which is considered unjust works. There are those who argue that the international boycott against apartheid South Africa at least contributed to the significant changes which have occurred in that country.

Boycotts are effective on various levels. A successful boycott can change public opinion and indicate to political representatives what course of action their constituencies are expecting from them. In addition, boycotts have also already made a clear economic impact in preventing companies and multinationals from supporting Israeli Apartheid.

Take the example of a boycott campaign against McDonald's that has been carried out throughout the Middle East: "McDonald's is a 'major corporate partner' of the Jewish United Fund. In its own words, the Jewish United Fund 'works to maintain American military, economic and diplomatic support for Israel; monitors and, when necessary, responds to media coverage of Israel.' Also, McDonald's chairman and CEO, Jack M. Greenberg, is an honorary director of the American-Israel Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

McDonald's [...] announced it is closing down its operation in the Middle East due to loss of revenue as a direct result of the boycott (Oct 2002), and is replacing Greenberg as its chairman and CEO (Dec 2002). Since the launch of the boycott campaign, two of Jordan's six McDonald's franchises have closed due to lack of business. In Egypt, McDonald's decided to change its brand name to Manfoods this past March, in an attempt to dodge the boycott. It had no effect and Egyptian police forces were ordered to guard the entrances to McDonald's restaurants, after stone throwing incidents took place. A total of 175 restaurants will be closed at a loss of \$350 million.¹⁸

¹⁷ Call for academic and cultural boycott of Israel, Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, accessed on 22 December 2011 at: <http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=869>

¹⁸ Stop the Wall, Boycott Section, accessed 9 July 2010, available at: <http://www.stopthewall.org/boycott/first/5.html#22>

The fact that the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) has passed a law that makes the support for the campaign for boycott, divestment and sanctions subject to legal sanctions including significant and punitive fines, is possibly at least an indication that it is seen to be effective.¹⁹

In relation to the specific issue of divestment, there are voices that suggest that this does not work. For example, John Silber, former president of Boston University, suggested with regard to the divestment campaigns in relation to South Africa that these are based on a fundamental misunderstanding of how equity markets work. He said that: while boycotting a company's products would actually affect their business, "once a stock issue has been made, the corporation doesn't care whether you sell it, burn it, or anything else, because they've already got all the money they're ever going to get from that stock. So they don't care."²⁰

However this does not reflect the reality that divestment - if it is done by significant investors with a degree of publicity - lowers the market value of the stock because the adverse publicity and major sales of a particular stock can suggest that prices in the stock may fall and thus encourage others to sell. Therefore, the company's value reduces and a lack of funds will hinder growth.

Is it right?

For many, the question of whether or not to participate in or support the campaign for boycott, divestment and sanctions is a very hard one to answer. Those who do support this are frequently accused of being anti-Israeli or anti-Semitic. Evidence of this can be seen for example in the following quote from the website of ZioNation - Progressive Zionism and Israel Web Log which reads:

'It doesn't matter why you signed the petition. It doesn't matter why you raised your hand in favor of an Israel boycott. If you did it, you are supporting a movement that is designed to destroy the Jewish national home. You are supporting the Hamas and those who oppose the peace process.

There is no way to support BDS without supporting the movement to destroy Israel, because that is what BDS is about. There is no reason for complacency about BDS and no reason to minimize the damage it is doing. It cannot be argued that BDS won't be effective, because it already clearly is effective.'²¹

However looking again at the Statement of Sabeel, the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Centre in Jerusalem on morally responsible investment, (see p. 2 above), it is clear that there are important questions we all have to ask ourselves in terms of whether and to what extent we want our money to support a situation which falls significantly short of our perception of what is just for both peoples involved in the conflict.

Uri Avnery of Gush Shalom, a very eminent and rightly well respected Israeli peace activist, does not agree with the call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions. In essence, he argues that it plays into the hands of those in Israel and beyond who want to believe and who want to act on the belief that 'everyone is against Israel' or even 'everyone hates the Jews'; secondly, he argues that the lack of clear distinction between a call for the boycott of settlement products and a call for the boycott of all Israeli products is harmful: 'If the world protest is clearly focused on the settlements, it will indeed cause many Israelis to realize that there is a clear line

¹⁹ There is a significant amount of information about this law on various websites. Our information comes from a variety of these sources and from partner NGOs. An article in Haaretz is a useful reference:

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/national/bill-to-punish-anti-israel-boycotters-passes-first-knesset-hurdle-1.347734>

²⁰ From: Wikipedia, accessed 6 July 2010, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divestment_campaign

²¹ ZioNation, Are Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Effective?, accessed 9 July 2010, available at: <http://www.zionism-israel.com/log/archives/00000739.html>

between the legitimate State of Israel and the illegitimate occupation.²² Finally, he argues that those who want to support peace in the region should focus not on boycotting but on working with Israeli peace activists.

The question will potentially also be answered differently, depending on the type of action proposed and which types of products, services, and activities are targeted.

Who suffers?

Our choices of how and where we spend our money have a direct impact on the people who make the goods and provide the services we do or do not choose to buy. The closure of shops, restaurants and factories, because of a boycott of their products, is likely to lead to job losses. This could affect people in many different places. The closure of 175 McDonald's food outlets in the Middle East will cost jobs in the countries affected. If a company decides not to import goods from the illegal settlements, then manufacturing and agricultural workers there will lose their jobs. Some of them are Palestinians. Some of them are Israeli settlers. If such a boycott led to the closure of companies in Israel, then Israelis (some of the Palestinians, too) would potentially lose their jobs.

It will be for each person to judge whether the potential and actual suffering caused by boycott, divestment and sanctions is justified.

Approaches of Different Churches

The question of whether or not to support the call for boycott, divestment and sanctions has exercised a number of different Christian Churches. The following is a selection of response from Christian Churches.

The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Consultation on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict August 2001

In response to the second Intifada and the ongoing violence in Palestine and Israel, the WCC sent a delegation to the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPTs) and Israel in 2001; the delegation reported to an Ecumenical Consultation in August 2001 and this Ecumenical Consultation concluded the following:

In particular the Consultation identified seven potential areas for coordinated action as the beginning of a joint process of ecumenical planning and strategizing for a concerted international response. These were:

- coordinating advocacy with governments
- **boycotting goods produced in Israeli settlements** in the occupied territories
- strengthening the "chain of solidarity" through prayer vigils
- resisting the destruction of property and uprooting of people from their homes and land
- encouraging and enabling the presence of ecumenical monitoring teams
- improving communication, interpretation and media reporting on the conflict and its causes
- increasing church, ecumenical, and interreligious delegations to and from Israel and the OPT.²³

²² Uri Avnery, Uri Avnery's column, Red and Green, 28/08/2010, accessed 13 October 2010, available at: <http://www.avnery-news.co.il/english/index.html>

²³ World Council of Churches, Report on the consultation convened by the WCC, accessed 9 July 2010, available at: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/public-witness-addressing-power-affirming-peace/middle-east-peace/international-ecumenical-consultation-on-the-palestinian-israeli-conflict.html>

The World Council of Churches

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has an active engagement in the Middle East and has considered the situation there on numerous occasions. The WCC has a separate programme of Ecumenical Accompaniment in Palestine and Israel which 'brings internationals to the West Bank to experience life under occupation. Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs) provide protective presence to vulnerable communities, monitor and report human rights abuses and support Palestinians and Israelis working together for peace. When they return home, EAs campaign for a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict through an end to the occupation, respect for international law and implementation of UN resolutions.'²⁴

In 2001, the WCC Executive Committee recommended an international boycott of goods produced in illegal settlements on occupied territory, and the WCC-related APRODEV agencies in Europe are now working to have Israeli settlement products fully and properly identified before shipment to the European Community in accordance with the terms of the EU's Association Agreement with Israel.²⁵

In the same Minute, the WCC Central Committee recalled its statement from 1992 which says that 'criticism of the Israeli government is not in itself anti-Jewish'²⁶

It then goes on to say:

'Yet illegal activities in occupied territory continue as if a viable peace for both peoples is not a possibility. We are not blind to facts and must not be complicit in them even unwittingly. The Central Committee, meeting in Geneva 15-22 February, 2005, therefore:

- **encourages** member churches to work for peace in new ways and to give serious consideration to economic measures that are equitable, transparent and non-violent;
- **persuades** member churches to keep in good contact with sister churches embarking on such initiatives with a view to support and counsel one another;
- **urges** the establishment of more and wider avenues of engagement between Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities pursuing peace;
- **reminds** churches with investment funds that they have an opportunity to use those funds responsibly in support of peaceful solutions to conflict. Economic pressure, appropriately and openly applied, is one such means of action.'²⁷

The Mennonite Church

The Mennonite Church has not yet made a formal statement on boycott, divestment and sanctions. However, in June 2007, a group of individual Mennonites²⁸ wrote an open letter To the Mennonite Church USA Congregations headed 'Becoming Peacemakers in Israel/Palestine'²⁹.

²⁴ Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel, accessed 9 July 2010, available at: <http://www.eappi.org/>

²⁵ World Council of Churches Central Committee, Minute on Certain Economic Measures for Peace in Israel/Palestine dated 22.2.2005, accessed 9 July 2010, available at: <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/international-affairs/regional-concerns/middle-east/minute-on-certain-economic-measures-for-peace-in-israelpalestine.html>

²⁶ *ibid.*

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Signatories: Daryl Byler (MCC Washington Office), Ron Byler (Mennonite Church USA Executive Leadership, Ed EPP (MEDA), Kim Vu Friesen (MC USA Executive Board), Stanley Green (Mennonite Mission Network), Rachele Lyndaker Schlabach (MCC Washington Office), Rich Meyer (Christian Peacemaker Teams), Mark Regier (Mennonite Mutual Aid, Carol Rose (Christian Peacemaker Teams) and Lee Schmucker (Mennonite Mission Network).

Under the heading 'In economic engagement, we encourage' they say:

- Groups visiting Palestine/Israel to consider staying in Palestinian communities including Bethlehem and Nazareth for at least a part of their time in the region to encourage economic development in Palestinian communities.
- Church institutions to gain greater understanding of their investments in this region and to avoid investments which violate international law and promote violence. We encourage exploring ways our investments and our role as investors can be used to provide hope and promote peace in this region.³⁰

Kairos: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Kairos Canada is a faith-based ecumenical organisation whose Member Churches are the Anglican Church of Canada, the Christian Reformed Church in North America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace, The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, The Canadian Religious Conference, the Mennonite Central Committee of Canada, and the Primates' World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF).

In 2008, Kairos Canada considered a detailed report entitled 'Economic Advocacy Measures - Options for Kairos Members for the Promotion of Peace in Palestine and Israel'³¹ in which a whole range of potential measures were considered. The recommendations regarding boycott, divestment and sanctions were as follows:

Recommendations relating to positive action

To encourage KAIROS' local networks to use their meetings, events and other avenues to which they may have access, to promote the purchase and distribution of products and services from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, such as those from the Zatoun organization, Holy Land Handicraft Cooperative Society, Holy Land Artisans, and the Alternative Tourism Group from Ramallah, both to assist the Palestinian people, and as a means of promoting awareness of the situation under Occupation. (Recommendation 1.1)

To consider ways of assisting fair trade and community-based organizations to publicize their products and services to potentially interested audiences in Canada. (Recommendation 1.2)

That KAIROS members use their meetings, events and other avenues to which they may have access, to promote the purchase and distribution of products and services from the Occupied Palestinian Territories, such as those from the Zatoun organization, Holy Land Handicraft Cooperative Society, Holy Land Artisans, and the Alternative Tourism Group from Ramallah, both to assist the Palestinian people, and as a means of educating church members and others about the situation under Occupation. (Recommendation 2.3)

That KAIROS members, in consultation with Middle East partners, consider allocating funds to micro-credit projects to support economic development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. (Recommendation 2.5)

Recommendations relating to boycott

That KAIROS not support any general boycott of Israeli products. (Recommendation 3.1)

²⁹ Quoted from a copy of the letter obtained by QCEA from one of the signatories

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ Kairos Canada, Economic Advocacy Measures, accessed 15 July 2010, available at:

http://www.kairoscanada.org/fileadmin/fe/files/PDF/HRTrade/Pal-Isr/Paper_EconomicAdvocacyMeasures_Jan08.pdf

Recommendations relating to divestment

That with the assistance of staff, KAIROS members who have not already done so consider adopting socially responsible investment screens to exclude from investment portfolios weapons manufacturers, military suppliers, banks and other corporations that abet violence. (Recommendation 2.6)

That where KAIROS members opt to pursue shareholder action respecting Canadian companies doing business in Israel or the Occupied Palestinian Territories (that are contributing directly or indirectly to violence, occupation or other human rights abuses in the region), shareholder action shall move through several stages, from dialogue with senior company management to filing shareholder proposals and, as a last resort, divestment. (Recommendation 2.7)

That KAIROS members consider joining existing shareholder actions involving U.S.-based companies that have been initiated by U.S. churches or other institutional investors, if their current portfolios include shares in these companies. (Recommendation 2.8)

Recommendations relating to sanctions

That KAIROS not support any use of sanctions against Israel. (Recommendation 3.2)³²

Kairos Canada has subsequently (in a statement made in December 2009) confirmed this position.³³

The Methodist Church of Great Britain

At its annual conference in Portsmouth in 2010, the Methodist Church adopted the following statement:

In listening to Church Leaders and our fellow-Christians in Israel Palestine as well as leaders of Palestinian civil society we hear an increasing consensus calling for the imposition of boycott, divestment and sanctions as a major strategy of non-violent resistance to the Occupation. The Conference notes the call of the WCC in 2009 for an 'international boycott of settlement produce and services' and calls on the Methodist people to support and engage with this boycott of Israeli goods emanating from illegal settlements (some Methodists would advocate a total boycott of Israeli goods until the Occupation ends).³⁴

It is useful to note that in the same document, there is also a call for a full arms embargo against all sides in the conflict.³⁵

³² *ibid.*

³³ Kairos Canada, Response to some Questions raised, 23 Dec. 2009, accessed 15 July 2010, available at: <http://www.kairoscanada.org/fileadmin/fe/files/PDF/cidacuts/CIDA-ResponsetoMediaQueries.pdf>

³⁴ Methodist Church of Great Britain, 2010 Conference Agenda Item 14, p. 222, accessed 15 July 2010, available at: <http://www.methodistconference.org.uk/assets/downloads/confrep-14-justice-for-palestine-israel-170510.pdf>

³⁵ *ibid.*

Quaker Statements

Thus far, there have been few formal statements agreed by Quaker Meetings or other bodies on this issue. The ones we have been able to find are:

Friends International Centre, Ramallah, Epistle from the centenary celebrations March 2010

Friends (Quakers) have had a presence in the West Bank, and in particular in Ramallah since the latter part of the 19th century; the Meeting House in Ramallah was built in 1910 and celebrated its centenary in March 2010. Friends from Europe, the US and other countries came to Ramallah to share the celebrations with local Friends. The Epistle sent by those Friends to Friends everywhere includes the following:

'As Woolman was resolved not to acquiesce to slavery, we are resolved not to be complicit to the many evils of the military occupation. We call on Friends everywhere to uphold and pray for the ongoing witness of the Ramallah Friends Meeting, and to join us in this witness. We ask Friends to discern what, in their own circumstances, they can best do to support those working to end this conflict and bring peace and justice to this troubled region. **We ask Friends to consider adopting boycott, divestment and sanctions** as we may be led to do, individually or corporately.'³⁶

Norway YM Item 5/2010 - The KAIROS Palestine Document

The Clerk introduced the Kairos Document - a statement from Palestinian Christians and Church Leaders about their hope for a just peace and their thoughts about Christian resistance, a "resistance with love as its logic... " which entails "... Seeing the image of God in the face of the enemy..." (4.2.3³⁷). They call us to engage in divestment and boycott of everything produced by the occupation. Norway Yearly Meeting decides to back the Kairos document. The Yearly Meeting asks Marit Kromberg and Hans Eirik Aarek to draft a letter to the Ministry of Finance. The web pages of *Gush Shalom* www.gush-shalom.org and *Global BDS Movement*: www.bdsmovement.net may be useful for identify the products which have been produced in occupied areas.

Britain Yearly Meeting

Meeting for Sufferings³⁸ discussed the issue in February and April 2011; the minute agreed in February reads in full:

S/11/02/ 4: Boycott, divestment and sanctions (Israel/Palestine)

Further to minute S/10/12/8 ii a) of our meeting on 4 December 2010, we have received paper S/11/02/A comprising this minute and a paper prepared by Marigold Bentley, Assistant General Secretary of Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW), together with the Kairos Palestine Document A moment of truth (S/11/02/B), and the Quaker Council for European Affairs Discussion Paper entitled Responses to the call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (S/11/02/C).

Marigold Bentley has introduced this paper, which suggests that Meeting for Sufferings may wish to consider a number of actions in response to the request received from the Palestinian Churches in support of the campaign for boycott, divestment and sanctions.

We need a spiritual faith-based response as we struggle between how the world is and how we want it to be.

We need to find strategies to challenge the violence and work to end it. We have strongly expressed our pain and outrage.

We want to change hearts and minds, and know that words, or actions, or both are needed.

³⁶ Friends International Centre Ramallah, accessed 1 September 2010, available at:

http://www.ramallahquakers.org/pdfs/10-april-FICR_consultation_epistle.pdf (emphasis added)

³⁷ Quotes from paragraph 4.2.3 of the English translation of the Kairos document, see also www.kairospalestine.ps

³⁸ Meeting for Sufferings is the standing representative body entrusted with the general care of matters affecting Britain Yearly Meeting and, in the intervals between Yearly Meetings, the making of decisions and the issuing of statements in the name of Britain Yearly Meeting (Britain Yearly Meeting, Quaker Faith and Practice, section 7.02, accessed on 30 November 2011 at: <http://qfp.quakerweb.org.uk/qfp7-02.html>)

Britain Yearly Meeting through Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) is already advocating boycott of settlement goods. It has advocated appropriate labelling of goods from the illegal settlements. We are in unity in supporting EAPPI and its work on the issue of proper labelling of settlement products. We encourage Friends to study the subject of economic boycott using the documents we have had today. We ask them to consider further what action may be possible in our local and area meetings, recognising that there needs to be a 'challenge to political systems that deny the equality of Israeli Jews and Palestinians' (quote from open letter sent by Sandra Tamari to American Friends Service Committee).

In April the Meeting came back to this issue in light of many responses to this minute from Area Meetings throughout Britain. The minute agreed in April 2011 reads in full³⁹:

S/11/04/ 4: Boycott, divestment and sanctions (Israel/Palestine)

Further to minute S/11/02/ 4 of 5 February 2011, we received minutes on this matter from the following Area Meetings: Southern Marches, Sussex East, Surrey & Hampshire Border, Swarthmoor, North London, Cambridgeshire, East Cheshire, Ipswich & Diss, North West London, Bristol, Hampshire & Islands, Devon and Manchester & Warrington and North Cumbria. Our assistant clerk has summarised the Area Meeting minutes received, and we have returned to our consideration of the issues raised in the papers received at our last meeting (paper S/11/02/A prepared by Marigold Bentley, Assistant General Secretary of Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW), the Kairos Palestine Document A moment of truth (paper S/11/02/B), and the Quaker Council for European Affairs Discussion Paper entitled Responses to the call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (S/11/02/C).

We have heard of the responses of Jewish Peace Groups within Israel. We hear these Israeli citizens risk being criminalized by their own government if they actively support the Palestinian call for cultural and economic boycott. We were informed that most Jewish Israeli Peace Groups support the boycott of settlement goods, and only some support a boycott of Israel. A just peace for Palestine means security for Israel too, and nonviolent protests by both Israelis and Palestinians for the end of the occupation are heartening to observe.

For nine years Quakers have been witnessing individually and through the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) to the human rights abuses of the military occupation of the Palestinian Territories. Today we have considered whether we should add nonviolent action to our witnessing - not as punishment or revenge, but as an external pressure to achieve change.

We understand the history and the trauma of the past, but it is the Israelis who are the stronger and they need to make the changes.

John Woolman's words (Quaker faith & practice 26.61) remind us of the powerful sense we have of being brothers and sisters with people of other faiths. There are three main faiths in this part of the world, and we want to proceed in ways which allow dialogue to continue. We consider we should now act publically and, well-informed, be able to explain our action to others - because people matter more than territory, and because we approach others with a desire for peace.

Difficult decisions taken by us today can be reversed. The request for boycott comes from those who will suffer most, but a decision for boycott will give hope to Palestinians and support to those in Israel who are working for peace.

In face of the armed oppression of poor people and the increasing encroachment of the illegal settlements in the West Bank, we cannot do nothing.

Our hearts are full of compassion for Israelis and Palestinians, all of whom are suffering from the effects of the occupation.

We are clear then that it would be wrong to support the illegal settlements by purchasing their goods. We therefore ask Friends throughout Britain Yearly Meeting to boycott settlement goods, until such time as the occupation is ended.

We are not at this time proposing to boycott goods from Israel itself, being unwilling to jeopardise continuing dialogue with Israelis and British Jews.

³⁹ Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings, 2 April 2011, accessed at: <http://www.quaker.org.uk/meeting-sufferings-april-2011> on 22 December 2011

We pray fervently for both Israelis and Palestinians, keeping them together in our hearts. We hope they will find an end to their fears and the beginning of their mutual co-existence based on a just peace. And so we look forward to the end of the occupation and the end of the international boycott. We envisage our future relationship with both peoples as one of loving and generous co-operation.

Although we unite in this decision, we recognize that Friends have different views, and we must treat one another tenderly.

Sweden Yearly Meeting

In May 2011, Sweden Yearly Meeting discussed the matter at their Yearly Meeting Session and agreed that 'Sweden YM recommends its members to refrain from goods produced in illegal settlements in the areas occupied by Israel'⁴⁰

Netherlands Yearly Meeting

Netherlands Yearly Meeting, at its session in May considered their response to the Kairos Palestine Document and agreed to respond to those who had written it. The full text of their letter in English translation is given below⁴¹:

ANSWER FROM THE NETHERLANDS QUAKERS TO THE 'KAIROS DOCUMENT' BY PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS

July 5, 2011

Dear Friends, for thus Jesus called his disciples, those who do as he taught them,

As Dutch Quakers, members of the Religious Society of Friends in the Netherlands, we have respectfully received your Kairos document, your cry for justice. Your attitude of love signals hope to us, notwithstanding your suffering in consequence of the occupation. As you write, your call to us arises from a historic moment of unity among Palestinian Christians. It is heartening to see that this unity among Palestinians appears to have increased in the meantime.

We too want to see 'the face of God in every human being'. Our faith-based principle is, also, equal rights to a dignified existence for all and the right to protection of the oppressed. It is in line with our tradition to break down images of animosity, to seek connectivity and constructive dialogues and to work for justice, peace and security for all.

Your document has touched us deeply and we feel called to respond.

You are asking us to speak a word of truth, by taking a stance against the Israeli occupation of the land that you have inhabited for generations. Moreover you suggest us to add deeds to words and adjust our behaviour as consumers and as investors, so we no longer support that occupation.

We have taken longer to answer you than we should. We have once again during this annual gathering pondered what Christ asks of us in our situation, knowing yours. Many of us for a long time already resist buying produce from the illegal Jewish settlements and prefer to buy Palestinian products, in as far as these can be distinguished in our shops. Your story and your appeal prompt us to continue doing so in a more consistent manner. We will gather information about further possibilities. We support our representatives in the Quaker Council for European Affairs in their efforts to improve product origin information. We will stay in contact with Quakers in Ramallah to further support them in their peace work where we can.

Our truth, which is not necessarily *the* Truth, is that neither Israel nor any other nation can call a country their own if they control it with violence. We note a painful parallel with the politics of our European governments that make "the other" into an enemy in the areas that we call "our own" and where we live in relative prosperity. The notion that Palestine/Israel is one nation between the river Jordan and the Mediterranean now sounds further removed from reality than ever before.

⁴⁰ Informal translation of the key part of the minute received by QCEA from Sweden YM by e-mail

⁴¹ The original of this statement in Dutch is available at:

http://quakers.nu/nl/Home/Onieuws/index.php?news_part=detail&news_id=125, the translation given here is the official translation produced and supplied by Netherlands Yearly Meeting.

In the Netherlands too, support is dwindling for the notion of a unity of peoples rooted in a shared culture in which the same God is worshipped.

In addition to a word of truth we are searching for a word of love we would like to speak. As Netherlands Quakers and as Netherlands churches we have so far been trying in vain to engage in conversation with the representatives of Israel in our country. We are prepared to listen to them too, to allow them the chance to express to us their suffering - historical, alleged and real - hoping that this will help them to move on and leave it behind them. We would want to ask them whether developments in their region, the appeal for justice and democracy of neighbouring peoples is a Kairos moment for them too, *the Moment* to put their ideals into practice and to follow their Calling to be an example to other nations.

We hold on to the awareness and the resulting hope that beyond words and deeds that divide, beyond the suffering that people inflict on each other, there is a reality in which God connects everyone and can touch every heart.

Together with you we express our confidence that God's goodness will prevail.

With Friendly greetings,

Netherlands Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Gathered Barchem from 13-15 May 2011, On behalf of Friends, Kees Nieuwerth, clerk

German Yearly Meeting

At its annual meeting in 2011, German Yearly Meeting spent considerable time in workshops and in plenary on considering their response to the Kairos Palestine document and specifically the call for boycott, divestments and sanctions. The following text (unpublished elsewhere at the time of writing) was agreed:

Dear Friends in Palestine,

We thank you for your courageous description of your situation and your powerful message of "Loving thine Enemy". We feel the power of your faith in the face of the desperate situation of the Palestinians. This power fills us with hope, as we recognize that the timeless message of nonviolence and of Love for both Neighbor and Enemy is being heard in our time.

We hear your cry of despair. We feel in fellowship with you, when in spite of everything, you write, in your Kairos Palestine Document, that the belief in a good and just God upholds you in this arduous time. We encourage and support you in your stance that human dignity is indivisible and that "together we can build up the land in love and mutual respect".

The Psalms show us the way. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, (Ps 24:1)". A violent occupation against international law can not be justified on the basis of an arbitrarily supposed divine mandate. We will support you in our political activities, and in our ecumenical and inter-religious cooperation.

In your letter you ask us to boycott the products of the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and for sanctions and disinvestments. We in German Yearly Meeting have agonized at length over the answer to your appeal. There are individual Friends who will gladly accept your request, but as a body, German Yearly Meeting cannot comply with your call for a Boycott.

We find unanimity in our response to your demands in the following three areas of concern: the upholding of respect for Human Rights, the implementation of international law, and the guarantee of the safety and security of all parties. Security is never to be found in military strength and superiority. Our solidarity therefore rests with all those who campaign for these demands, whether in Palestine or in Israel. We recognize the necessity of resisting injustice - and that only nonviolent means can keep open the way to a neighborly and peaceful future.

We will make our voices heard by our government and relevant political decision-makers, drawing attention in particular to illegal land seizures and settlements as well as to exports of armaments.

We are at one with you in praying for all who suffer in these circumstances and who are searching for solutions.

On behalf of German Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Sabine Alvermann (Clerk), Horst-Dieter Breuer (Clerk)

Local Meetings

Winchester (UK) Preparative (or Local) Meeting's Peace and Justice Group in its report to the Preparative Meeting in April 2010, raised the issue of the conflict and our response and quoted Desmond Tutu: *"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality"*⁴²

The report did not go so far as to say that it supported boycott, divestment and sanctions but suggested that pressure might be put on the local authority not to accept a tender from a company known at that time to be involved in contracts in Israel which were arguably supporting the occupation.

There are two Minutes from US-based Quaker Meetings (Atlanta Friends Meeting approved in July 2006 and Olympia Friends Meeting approved in August 2006) both of which call on the US government to halt military exports to Israel. The two minutes are almost identical and are focused on the use of US-made weapons being used in warfare in the Palestine/Israel conflict by Israel.

These two Minutes are not addressing the question of a general boycott or general divestment and sanctions but rather focus on the arms trade, an issue where Friends would find little difficulty in agreeing that this should be stopped in general and in particular instances where arms are used for oppression and war.

Conclusions

It is clear that the questions raised by the call for BDS are serious and important questions. It is equally clear that there are no easy answers and that different individuals, groups and countries will respond differently to the call.

This paper is intended to generate discussion among Friends and is not intended to represent a policy position of QCEA in any way.

We encourage broad debate among Friends with a view to coming to a public position that Friends in Europe may be able to adopt.

Friends may wish to consider the following questions when discussing these issues:

- Are we fully aware of the extent to which our decisions about our shopping and our investments are connected to conflict in general and to the conflict in Palestine and Israel in particular?
- What are our feelings when we consider the call for boycott, divestment and sanctions?
- Do we have experience of acting on this call? In what areas of our lives? How did it/does it make us feel?
- Are we willing to talk about our decisions in this context with Friends, with neighbours, with our political representatives?
- Do we feel that there should be a corporate Quaker position on the call for BDS? If so, should this be at the level of your Yearly Meeting? Or at another level?

⁴² Unpublished paper from Winchester Peace and Justice Group, Winchester Local Meeting of Friends

Appendix 1 - Maps

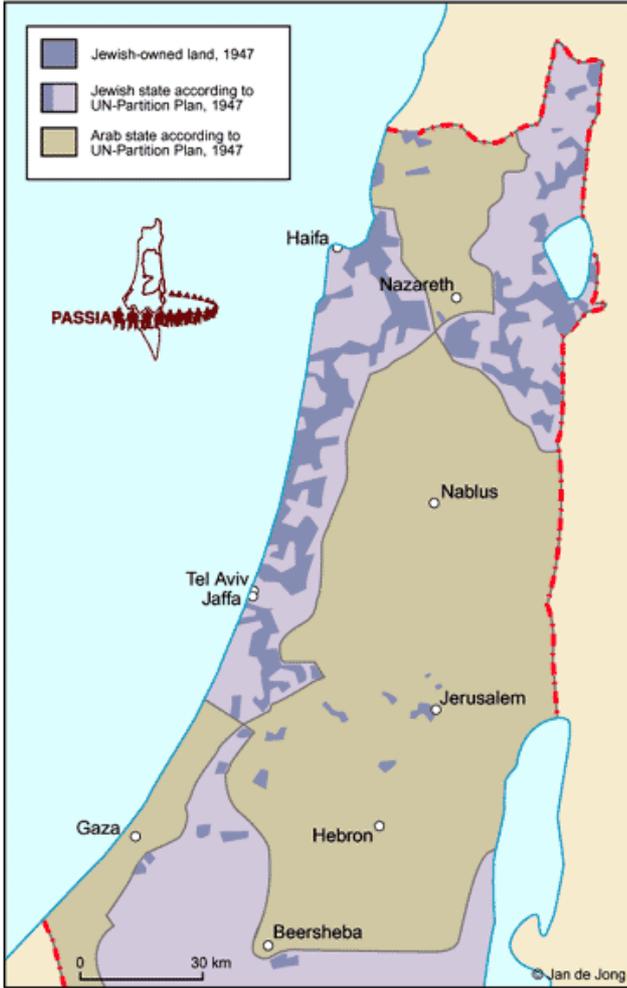
It is important to understand how the situation in Palestine and Israel is affecting the different populations. One way of visualising this is through maps.

We have found it difficult to find maps that show this clearly from sources that we are able to rely on. First, it is hard to know what sources to rely on. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the occupied Palestinian territory has maps on its website; however, we have not been able to find any which go back to 1948 and would therefore demonstrate the changes that have taken place.

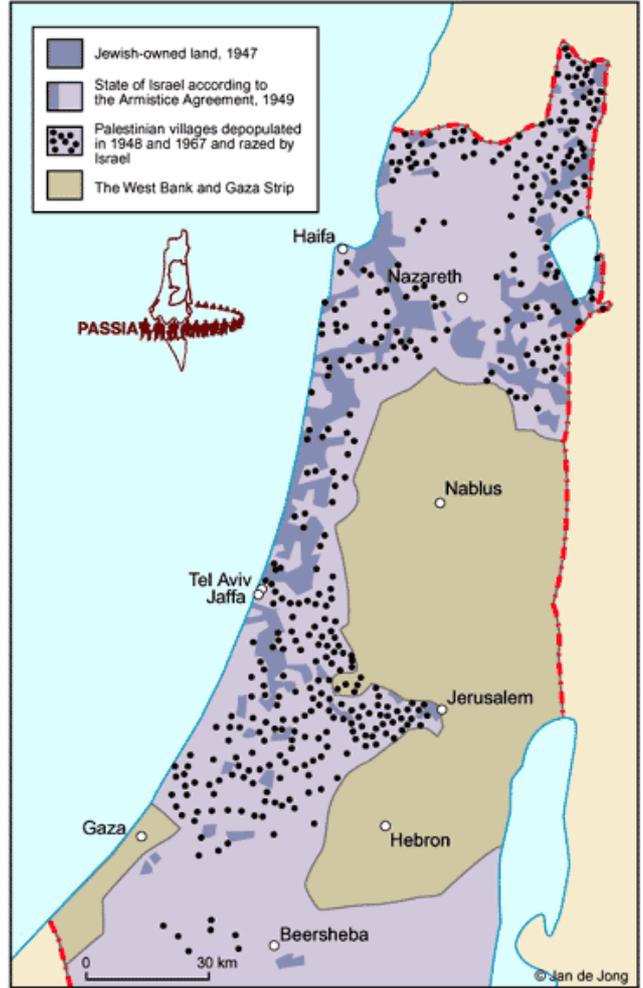
We have opted to use maps which we have accessed from the website of the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy. Hanan Ashrawi is the Chair of its Executive Committee and this seemed to us an indication that this is a reliable source.⁴³ Where the maps are from other sources, we have indicated this.

⁴³ The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, accessed 13 October 2010, available at <http://www.miftah.org/Maps.cfm>

Landownership in Palestine and the UN Partition Plan, 1947



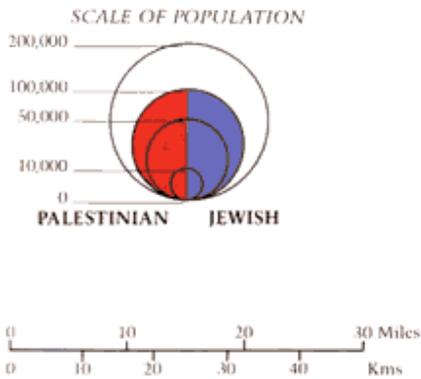
Palestinian Villages Depopulated in 1948 and 1967, and Razed by Israel



Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

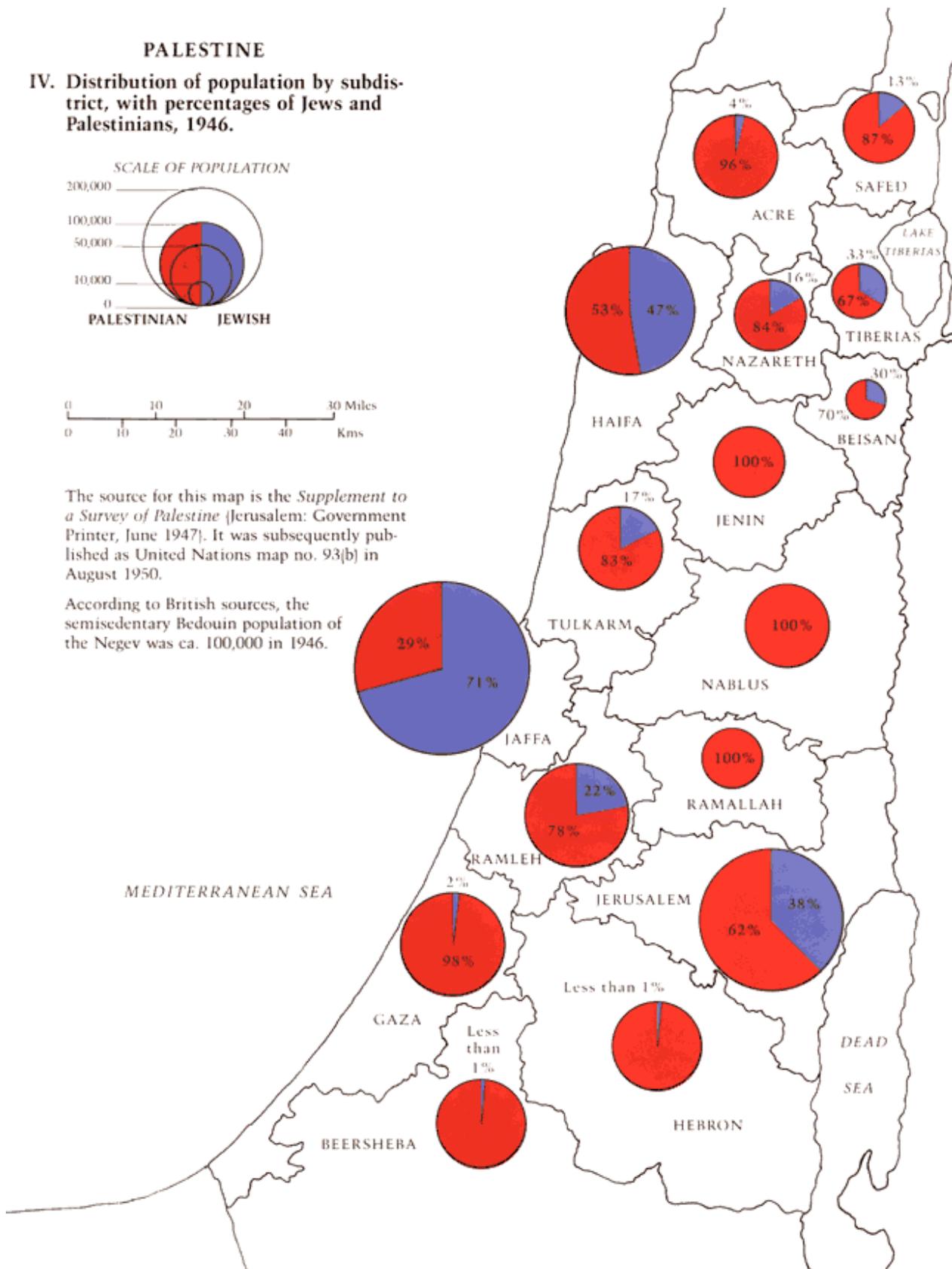
PALESTINE

IV. Distribution of population by subdistrict, with percentages of Jews and Palestinians, 1946.



The source for this map is the *Supplement to a Survey of Palestine* (Jerusalem: Government Printer, June 1947). It was subsequently published as United Nations map no. 93(b) in August 1950.

According to British sources, the semisedentary Bedouin population of the Negev was ca. 100,000 in 1946.



The Near East after the 1967 June War



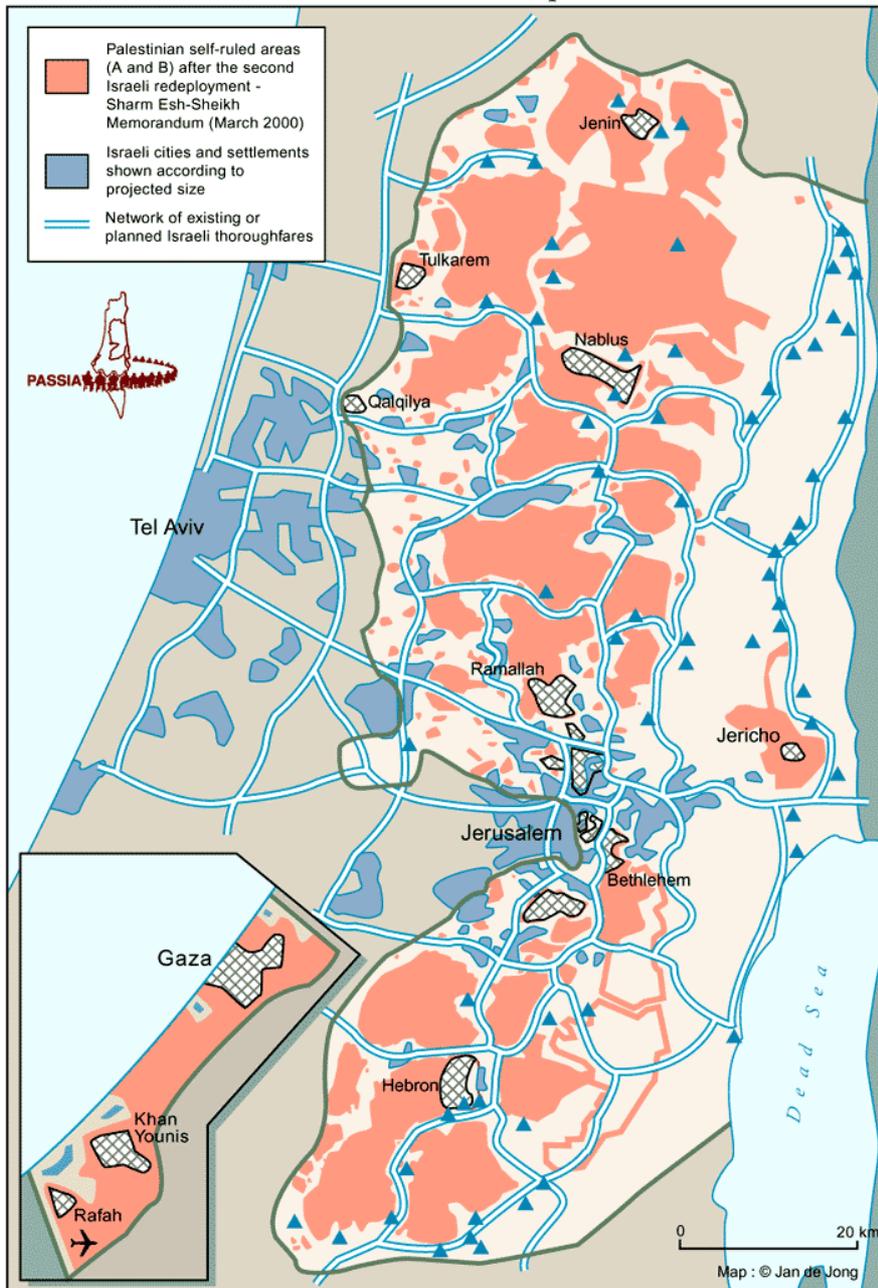
Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

Oslo II, 1995



Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

The West Bank and Gaza Strip, March 2000



Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

For the most recent maps, the OCHA website has many resources in a format that cannot easily be inserted into this paper. They are accessible at the OCHA map centre here:

<http://www.ochaopt.org/generalmaps.aspx?id=96&page=1>

Appendix 2 - Further Resources

The following is an open letter sent by Sandra Tamari to AFSC which is reprinted here with the author's permission:

September 9, 2010

Greetings Friends:

I wish the AFSC Board and staff a Spirit-filled and successful meeting this weekend in Philadelphia. My prayers are with you all as you welcome the new Secretary General, Shan Cretin, and embark on this new period of service based on Quaker testimonies and faith. Blessings to you all!

I write this letter with a concern that has been weighing on me. This concern involves the work of AFSC on Palestine and Israel. I know that discussions inside AFSC on the path forward in establishing true peace and justice in Palestine and Israel have been challenging and difficult for the organization. I recognize this difficulty and hesitation but I write to urge Friends to view the future of AFSC's role in this region through the lens of our commitment to the testimony of equality and our belief in the role of creative nonviolence to transform conflict.

In 2009, Palestinian Christians published a prayerful plea to Christian churches internationally to work actively to end the plight of the Palestinians. The Kairos Document, as this appeal is known, has inspired faith groups around the world to study the issue of the Israeli occupation and the concerns of Palestinians more closely. It is spawning serious discussion on the way forward in achieving a just settlement of this decades-long conflict.

Specifically, it has generated a healthy discussion about the Palestinian call for boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law. The BDS movement is gaining momentum internationally and inside Israel. It is endorsed by every Palestinian political faction and by unions and community organizations representing the breadth of Palestinian society in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, inside Israel, in the refugee camps and in the diaspora. It is a unifying and democratic position on the tactics to achieve justice. It is nonviolent and creative. This tactic worked to bring attention to human rights violations under South African apartheid and helped bring down racism in that country. It has the promise of bringing results to end the occupation and discrimination inside Israel. It has rejuvenated hope among Palestinians, young and old, Muslim and Christian, secular and religious, on the prospects of true international solidarity to end their oppression.

It saddens me that AFSC has failed respond to the Kairos Document (which is now over a year old) and to implement its own investment screen that specifically targets US corporations which contribute to continuing Israel's occupation. As a Palestinian, I acknowledge that this is an issue close to my heart, but I do not make this appeal from simply a Palestinian perspective. I have given this issue prayerful attention and believe it is my moral obligation as a Quaker to seek AFSC's support in endorsing the Kairos Document and upholding nonviolent actions that seek to build prospects for a just, equitable and sustainable peace.

BDS has caused concern among some because of fear of offending Jewish communities. No one wants to be accused of anti-Semitism. However, we must remember the BDS is not an attack on our Jewish friends. It is a challenge to discriminatory state policies that diminish the humanity of another people. It is a nonviolent challenge to political systems that deny the equality of Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

BDS has been characterized as a movement that seeks the destruction of Israel. Nothing could be further from the truth. The goals of the BDS movement are equal rights. There is no official statement on a final political outcome. Any solution, as long as it respects the human rights of both peoples, is the goal.

As AFSC continues its discernment on a position on Israel and Palestine, I plead with you to listen to the voices of the oppressed in this conflict. Their words are our challenge:

Palestinian civil organizations, as well as international organizations, NGOs and certain religious institutions call on individuals, companies and states to engage in divestment and in an economic and commercial boycott of everything produced by the occupation. We understand this to integrate the logic of peaceful resistance. **These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly sincerely proclaiming that**

their object is not revenge but rather to put an end to the existing evil, liberating both the perpetrators and the victims of injustice. (Kairos Document, No. 4.2.6)

I pray for courage as we walk together.

In peace,

Sandra Tamari

Co-Clerk, AFSC Quaker UN Committee

Committee Member, AFSC International Programs Executive Committee

Member, St. Louis Monthly Meeting, USA

Web-resources

There is a large number of website with more information about BDS. We can't provide all of the links here and the following is only a short selection. Each of them will lead to other material available. We do not recommend any of these specifically and we do not necessarily endorse what they say. They are listed here as a small selection of the information available out there.

The Global BDS Movement: <http://bdsmovement.net/>

US Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation. <http://endtheoccupation.org/article.php?list=type&type=34>

In the summer of 2010, Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) launched a new divestment initiative focused on the financial services corporation TIAA-CREF. <http://jvp.org/campaigns/tiaa-cref-divest-occupation>

Code Pink launched in the summer of 2009 the campaign "Stolen Beauty," a boycott campaign against Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories. For more information and to participate in this campaign go to: <http://www.stolenbeauty.org/>

<http://www.pacbi.org> Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

Coalition of Women for Peace <http://www.whoprofits.org/About.php> The Occupation Industry Research Project (**as with all websites, it is important to ensure that the information on specific companies is up to date**).