

# Questions & Answers

FOR THE RESOLUTION ON

## AVOIDING HP PRODUCTS

### Why avoid HP products?

HP is profiting from the oppression and suffering of the Palestinian people. **HP products and services play a significant role in Israel's military occupation of Palestinian territory, a regime of segregation and colonization.**

**CHECKPOINTS & SEGREGATION:** HPE's Basel system, a biometric access control system, is used at military checkpoints throughout the West Bank to control and restrict movement,<sup>1</sup> a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As of Jan. 31, 2017, there were 98 Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank. They are not for Israel's security: only a handful control access to Israel. All the rest bar Palestinians from each other's communities, and from hospitals, schools, jobs, their own farmland, and family members. **These checkpoints deny essential freedoms and cause daily suffering for Palestinians.**<sup>2</sup> HP also provides the **unethical ID/permit system by which Israel racially profiles and segregates Palestinians.**

Palestinians line up at 2:00 or 3:00 am hoping to get through checkpoints in time for work.



**Hedy Epstein**  
Holocaust survivor &  
human rights advocate

*"I was really not prepared for all the horrors that I saw. I had heard about checkpoints. And I thought a checkpoint was something like a tollbooth on a highway here in the United States. It's not like that at all. And it's gotten worse every time I return. The way they are now, they remind me of when animals are rounded up and taken to slaughter, it's just so humiliating."*

**SETTLEMENTS/COLONIZATION:** Two of HP's tech service providers are Matrix and Tact Testware, both operating in Modi'in Illit, the largest Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank. One of HP's major distributors also operates in Modi'in Illit.<sup>1</sup> **The settlements are built on stolen land and are the foundation of Israel's colonization of the West Bank.** They are recognized globally, including by all major powers, as illegal colonies and a major obstacle to peace in the region.

The Modi'in Illit settlement, one of the hundreds of segregated communities illegally colonizing Palestinian land and destroying prospects for peace.



**INHUMAN BLOCKADE:** HP maintains technology for the Israeli Navy, which enforces the devastating siege of Gaza.<sup>1</sup> **The blockade has created a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions for two million imprisoned Gazans.**<sup>3</sup> 70% or more in Gaza are dependent on humanitarian aid. Electricity is available only a few hours per day, and 90% of the water is unfit for human consumption. Relief agencies have warned that Gaza will soon become "unlivable."

1. <http://investigate.afsc.org/company/hp-inc>

2. [http://www.btselem.org/freedom\\_of\\_movement/checkpoints\\_and\\_forbidden\\_roads](http://www.btselem.org/freedom_of_movement/checkpoints_and_forbidden_roads)

3. <https://www.unrwa.org/gaza-emergency>

The Israeli Navy frequently attacks Gaza fisherman – who need to fish for survival - within their own waters.



## Why should United Methodists avoid HP products?

For nearly 50 years, United Methodists have joined the world community in appealing to both the Israeli and United States governments to end the occupation and bring freedom and justice to the Palestinian people. The UMC believes peace is possible, with security and equality for Israelis and Palestinians. The church also **has stated for decades that the military occupation and construction of Israeli settlements on Palestinian land must end to achieve a just peace in the Holy Land.**

For more than eight years, United Methodists have joined other religious groups in **shareholder advocacy with HP over their involvement in the Israeli occupation.** Many United Methodists have sent letters protesting that involvement. HP has not been willing to end their complicity in Israel's oppressive policies.<sup>4</sup>



In December 2009, Christians in the Holy Land issued the **Kairos Palestine Document, a profound statement of faith and an urgent call to action, signed by thousands of Palestinian Christians and endorsed by the Heads and Patriarchs of Churches in Jerusalem.**

"Our question to our brothers and sisters in the Churches today is: **Are you able to help us get our freedom back?** For this is the only way you can help the two peoples attain justice, peace, security and love."

*Speaking of boycott and divestment:* "These advocacy campaigns must be carried out with courage, openly and 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....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."

In 2012, the United Methodist Church asked "all companies that profit from and/or support settlements through their business activities to examine these and **stop any business that contributes to serious violations of international law, promotes systemic discrimination or otherwise supports ongoing military occupation.**"<sup>5</sup>

4. [https://www.kairosresponse.org/corporate\\_engagement\\_04-11.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/corporate_engagement_04-11.html)  
5. 2016 UMC Book of Resolutions #6111

## What does the Bible say about making profit from oppression?

*He will not enjoy the profit from his trading. For he has oppressed the poor and left them destitute; he has seized houses he did not build. Job 20:18-19*

*The Lord enters into judgment against the elders and leaders of his people: 'It is you who have ruined my vineyard; the plunder from the poor is in your houses. What do you mean by crushing my people and grinding the faces of the poor?' Isaiah 3:14-15*

## Are boycotts moral?

Where there has been a history of good faith engagement, as several churches have had with HP,<sup>4</sup> targeted divestment and boycotts are highly moral. These actions will help keep our church from complicity in sins against our neighbors in the Holy Land. Just as important, **boycotts and divestment are nonviolent methods of opposing evil.** By employing peaceful means for addressing injustice, we provide a much-needed Christian witness to the world.

## Why focus on just this company?

It isn't feasible to focus on many companies simultaneously for a boycott. We have to take them one (or a few) at a time. Several other companies have been the focus of boycott and divestment campaigns in recent years due to their involvement in the Israeli occupation, and those campaigns have been successful. Now a broad international coalition is focusing on HP.



## I already have an HP product. Do I have to buy new equipment to support the boycott?

**No, this does not mean you need to dispose of your HP equipment** or that you have to stop buying supplies for it. You could put a label on it that says "This is my last HP!" (see them on our website). You also can look for HP-compatible printer cartridges from non-HP sources. When shopping for new equipment, please avoid HP products and let the salesperson know why you are not interested in HP products – a great way to expand awareness of the boycott and its root cause, the Israeli occupation.

## ***I have heard this boycott compared to actions to end apartheid in South Africa.***

### ***Is that really a valid comparison?***

Yes. In 2017, a UN Commission has published a report with extensive documentation that **clearly identifies Israel's occupation regime as apartheid**, based on the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.<sup>6</sup>

**The way HP technology is used in Israel is reminiscent of Polaroid technology used for the notorious passbook system in South Africa.** Polaroid's 1977 withdrawal from South Africa marked a turning point in the international effort to end apartheid there.



South Africa used a complex passbook system to control the movement of non-whites.

**Polaroid** technology was key to that apartheid system.

Israel uses a complex permit system to control the movement of Palestinians.

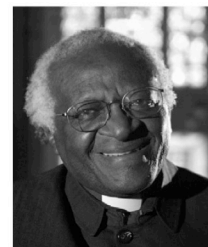
**hp** technology is key to this apartheid system.

**WRONG FOR SOUTH AFRICANS.  
WRONG FOR PALESTINIANS.**

**Archbishop Desmond Tutu** has said: "I have been to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and I have witnessed the racially segregated roads and housing that reminded me so much of the conditions we experienced in South Africa under the racist system of Apartheid....In South Africa, we could not have achieved our freedom and just peace without the help of people around the world...through the use of nonviolent means such as boycotts and divestment."

**Tutu wrote to United Methodists in 2012:** "The human community cannot be silent in the face of the gross injustice being meted out to the people of Palestine. If international courts and governments refuse to deal

with this matter, we in the churches and in the rest of civil society really have no choice but to act in small ways and big ways."<sup>7</sup> Both Tutu and Nelson Mandela have said that worldwide boycott & divestment campaigns were a vital part of ending apartheid in South Africa.



6. [https://www.kairosresponse.org/un\\_report\\_apartheid\\_march2017.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/un_report_apartheid_march2017.html)

7. [https://www.kairosresponse.org/endorsement\\_statements.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/endorsement_statements.html)

### ***Is this call to action coming from an official body of the church?***

While there has not been a request for this specific boycott, **Resolution #6111 in the 2016 Book of Resolutions endorses boycott of companies profiting from the occupation & settlements.** UMKR has joined the Boycott HP campaign, an international coalition of religious and secular groups working for a just peace in Israel/Palestine. Friends Fiduciary Corporation (Quakers), The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, Alliance of Baptists, Mennonite Central Committee, Unitarian Universalists, and **ten UMC annual conferences have voted for divesting from HP.**

### ***Do boycotts like this really work?***

Yes! Earlier boycotts have convinced companies to leave the illegal settlements in the West Bank. Examples are Veolia Environnement, Mul-T-Lok, Barkan Wineries, Unilever, Achva, and Intercosma. The international boycott of SodaStream – which was joined by the UMC General Board of Church and Society – led to the company leaving its settlement location. G4S, *the third largest private employer in the world*, which Wespeth divested from in 2014, has announced it is ending its contract with Israeli prisons. (Wespeth manages the UMC's retirement, health and welfare benefits.)



Companies do not like having their reputations harmed, and they don't like losing customers. **When companies find that the reputational and financial risks of remaining involved in the occupation outweigh the subsidies provided by the Israeli government, they withdraw.** This makes news in the business world and serves as a warning of the risk to other companies' reputations if they get involved. And that makes it harder to find another business partner willing to support the occupation.

## ***L've heard that boycotting companies involved in the Israeli occupation is anti-Semitic. Is it?***

No, it is not anti-Semitic to criticize or try to change the actions of the government of Israel, as Jewish Voice for Peace and many other Jewish organizations worldwide, including in Israel, have made clear. **This boycott is not focused on people because of who they are; it is focused on policies and practices that are unjust and destructive.** The boycott is based on the principles that Palestinians deserve to enjoy the same rights as the rest of humanity, and that Israel must comply with international law.

## ***Who else supports boycotts like this?***

Around the world, **dozens of Christian, Muslim and Jewish organizations and denominations and hundreds of secular groups** support the economic actions of boycott and/or divestment to end the 50-year-old military occupation of Palestinian territory and stop the expansion of Israeli-only settlements and roads.<sup>9</sup>

9. [https://www.kairosresponse.org/global\\_boycott\\_support.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/global_boycott_support.html) AND [https://www.kairosresponse.org/who\\_supports\\_divestment.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/who_supports_divestment.html)

## **Rabbi Brant Rosen**

Rabbinical Council, Jewish Voice for Peace



*"When will we find the wherewithal to say out loud that this policy of home demolitions, checkpoints, evictions, increased Jewish settlements, and land expropriations is inhumane and indefensible? At the very least, will we be ready to put our money where our moral conscience is?"*

## ***Isn't HP known for practicing strong Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?***

HP's policy says: "HP's CSR commitments include... betterment of society through respect for universal human rights."<sup>7</sup> **Profiting from systemic violations of human rights and humanitarian law does not show respect for human rights.** If they want to live up to their stated principles, HP companies must step away from contracts related to the Israeli occupation.

7. <http://www8.hp.com/us/en/hpe/hp-information/livingprogress/governance/humanrights.html>

## ***Didn't HP split into two companies?***

Yes, in November 2015, HP split into two firms: HP Inc. (HPQ) for consumer hardware (PCs and printers), and Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) for business solutions (services, servers, storage, networking). Further splits are anticipated. These companies share facilities, management, supply chains, and branding and collaborate on purchasing and bidding. So HP companies are to be avoided until it is clear which ones are responsible.

## ***Have you notified HP of this boycott?***

United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) sent letters to HP Inc. and to HPE in March 2017, advising them of the reasons it has joined the international coalition boycotting their companies. The companies have also received letters from other organizations participating in the international HP boycott.<sup>8</sup>

8. [https://www.kairosresponse.org/hp\\_letters\\_march2017.html](https://www.kairosresponse.org/hp_letters_march2017.html)

## ***When will the boycott of HP end?***

UMKR and many other organizations around the world have asked HP companies to end all contracts with Israel by which they profit from the military occupation of Palestine and involvement with illegal Israeli-only settlements. When they conclude those contracts and comply with international law, the boycott will end.

## ***What else can I do?***

**Go to UMKR's website!**

**See the HP BOYCOTT PAGE at [kairosresponse.org](http://kairosresponse.org):**



- **ASK YOUR CHURCH to join the HP-Free Church campaign from FOSNA.** We can help you with this! CONTACT US at [info@kairosresponse.org](mailto:info@kairosresponse.org).

- **SIGN FOR YOURSELF & GATHER SIGNATURES for the International Petition** calling on HP companies to end their involvement in the oppression of the Palestinian people. *FIND the petition link at our HP Boycott page.*

- **DOWNLOAD this Q&A and our Quick Facts sheet** to SHOW friends, family & others why you won't buy HP.

- **PRINT a label for your HP product** that says: "This is my last HP!" *DOWNLOAD docs and labels from our site.*

- **NOTIFY local HP retailers and shoppers** about the HP boycott – *FIND resources and instructions at our site.*

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**Find information & resources for action:**

**WWW.KAIROSRESPONSE.ORG**