

# QUICK FACTS:

# BDS for Palestinian Human Rights



## What is BDS?

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) is a Palestinian-led movement for freedom, justice and equality. BDS upholds the simple principles that Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity, and that Israel must comply with international law. The call for BDS was made by 170 organizations in Palestinian civil society in 2005. *In 2009, this call was echoed by Palestinian Christians (see back page).*

**These economic actions are time-honored, successful tools for addressing injustice.** The civil rights Montgomery Bus Boycott (US, 1950's), the farm workers' Grapes Boycott (US, 1960's), the ecumenical boycott of Mt. Olive Pickle Co (US, 2000's), and the divestment movement to end South African apartheid (global, 1960's-80's) are notable examples, but there are many more.

## Why do it?

The growth of the BDS movement sends a clear message to Palestinians, Israelis, corporations and world governments: citizens of the world are determined to break the yoke of the Israeli occupation and to see the oppressed Palestinian people achieve freedom and justice.

## Where does the UMC stand?

In 2012, the UMC called for a global ban (boycott) of products from Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. In 2014, the United Methodist Pension Board divested from G4S, a British security company, saying that action was due in part to the company's violations of Palestinian human rights. In 2016 the board banned investments in 5 Israeli banks and one more Israeli business because they violate Palestinians' human rights.

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Isaiah 58:6*



## International & Interfaith Support

In vibrant BDS campaigns around the world, the BDS movement is supported by government bodies, financial institutions, and many other entities representing millions of people. Many Israeli groups and dozens of Christian denominations and Jewish organizations in the US, Europe, Africa, Australia and South America have given their support to boycott and divestment campaigns to end the Israeli occupation. See more at [kairosresponse.org](http://kairosresponse.org)

## BDS works!

Numerous companies targeted by boycott or divestment campaigns have **left the West Bank settlements, ended contracts with Israel or closed operations in Israel.** Here are just a few examples: Avaya (Israeli; beauty products; sold worldwide), SodaStream (Israeli; appliances, beverages; sold worldwide), Heineken (Dutch brewing company), Royalife (Israeli; home textiles), G4S (British; multinational; security firm; world's 3rd largest private employer), Veolia (French; multinational; transportation, energy, water management, sanitation), Orange (French; telecommunications; 256 million customers) and General Mills, (US; food manufacturer distributing globally).

# They are speaking to us. Will we listen?



## Palestinian Christians' profound statement of faith and urgent call to action

Signed by thousands of Palestinian Christians Endorsed by all 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."

[Calling for 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."



"I am fully behind the attempt of the United Methodist Church to divest from companies that support Israel's occupation. Allowing Israel to behave towards the Palestinians as if they were not normal human beings just like us eventually will lead to an ever progressing dehumanization of mankind."

– Hajo Meyer, Holocaust Survivor

"United Methodists must stand in solidarity with our Christian brethren in Palestine....Please do not neglect this God-given opportunity for our church to show that we truly mean what we have said in past resolutions, and that we will not knowingly support the injustice of the occupation with our investment funds."

– Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, UMC

*In support of a divestment resolution in 2012*



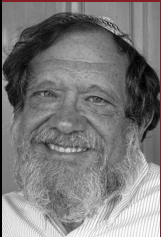
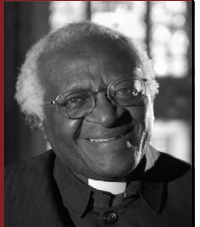
"Each and every one of us—including those members of our delegation who grew up in the Jim Crow South, in apartheid South Africa, and on Indian reservations in the U.S.—was shocked by what we saw. We issue an urgent call to others who share our commitment to

racial justice, equality, and freedom [and] we unequivocally endorse the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Campaign." – Angela Davis, author, academic, activist. *With tour in Palestine in 2011*

"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."

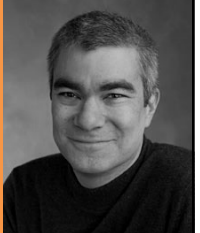
"It is becoming more and more clear that responsibility for brokering a sustainable solution to the crisis in the Holy Land rests with civil society...."

– Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate



"[Selective divestment] seeks to provide a way for those who oppose the Occupation to take actions in their own personal lives that reflect their ethical outrage at Israeli policies....It does not target Israel as a society; it targets only the Occupation itself." – Rabbi Michael Lerner, Tikkun

"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?" – Rabbi Brant Rosen, Jewish Voice for Peace Rabbinical Council



## 3 Things You Can Do

at our website: [KairosResponse.org](http://KairosResponse.org)

1. **SIGN UP** for UMKR monthly news to hear about advocacy for human rights in Israel/Palestine.
2. **LEARN & TEACH:** use our resources to learn more and share in your church and community.
3. **SUPPORT** UMKR's boycott, divestment, and other campaigns for Palestinian human rights.

United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) is an international grassroots justice movement responding to the Kairos Palestine Document

"A Moment of Truth," an urgent call from Christians in the Holy Land for effective action to end the Israeli occupation and achieve a just peace in the Holy Land. UMKR seeks – through nonviolent action and in partnership with our Palestinian sisters and brothers in Christ – freedom, justice and equality for all Palestinians and Israelis.

