

# Time To Divest!

**A campaign to end Scottish Local Authority Pension Fund investments in companies complicit in Israel's illegal occupation and violations of Palestinian rights**

[www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net)

2018 marks the 70-year anniversary of the Palestinian 'Nakba', the 'catastrophe', which resulted in over 750,000 Palestinians being driven from their homes, villages and lands. Referencing government archives, Israeli historian Ilan Pappé revealed that this process of ethnic cleansing was planned and systematically implemented by leaders of the Zionist movement. The Palestinian refugees and internally displaced have never been allowed to return to their confiscated homes and lands. Today, some five million Palestinian refugees are threatened with the loss of primary health care, basic education and emergency food assistance due to Trump's cut in funding to the UN's relief and works agency for Palestinian refugees.

Palestinians have endured a brutal military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza since 1967. Gazans live under siege, in desperate conditions – 97% of drinking water is contaminated. In the West Bank, Israel continues to build and expand illegal colonies while intensifying their dispossession, imprisonment and torture of Palestinians.

Despite the increasing belligerence of Trump, Netanyahu and their far right supporters, the Israeli government is afraid that worldwide anger at apartheid is repeating itself and the international campaign to boycott, divest and sanction Israel (BDS), with continuing Palestinian steadfastness and resistance, will succeed.

We call on all people of conscience – Scottish trade unionists, supporters and campaigners for justice and equality – to join the **Time to Divest!** campaign. In a global world, corporations are increasingly directly involved or complicit in Israel's illegal occupation, in the torture, oppression and dispossession of Palestinians. Let us stop our local authority pensions funding violations of Palestinian rights!

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*"An act or omission (failure to act) by a company, or individual representing a company, that 'helps' (facilitates, legitimises, assists, encourages, etc.) another, in some way, to carry out a human rights abuse, and the knowledge by the company that its act or omission could provide such help."*

The UN Global Compact defines corporate complicity

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## Time to Divest

[www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net)

[info@timetodivest.net](mailto:info@timetodivest.net)



## UNISON Scotland's International Committee

[www.unison-scotland.org/international/](http://www.unison-scotland.org/international/)

[www.facebook.com/unison.scot.international/](https://www.facebook.com/unison.scot.international/)



## Scottish PSC

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

[campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk)



Scottish Palestine  
Solidarity Campaign

Building effective solidarity  
with the Palestinian people

## Scottish Friends of Palestine

[www.scottishfriendsofpalestine.org](http://www.scottishfriendsofpalestine.org)

[info@scottishfriendsofpalestine.org](mailto:info@scottishfriendsofpalestine.org)



## The companies and our pension funds



- Provides financing for construction in Israeli settlements and acts as guarantor to major contractors and construction companies who build in Occupied Palestine.
- Finances the Jerusalem light rail project, designed to connect the illegal settlements with Jerusalem.
- Provides mortgages for settlers and loans to local authorities of settlements.
- Operates branches in illegal settlements: Ariel, Beitar Illit, Modi'in Illit, Ma'ale Adumim, Pisgat Ze'ev, Gilo and Ramot.
- Discriminates against Palestinian citizens of Israel – refusing to transfer accounts of Palestinian citizens to branches located in Jewish populated areas.
- Finances the military city project for the Israeli army in the Negev.

Pension Funds  
that invest in  
Bank Hapoalim



Falkirk Council



### *Decisions to exclude / divest from Bank Hapoalim:*

- *Sampension, the third largest pension fund in Denmark (2017)*
- *United Methodist Church (2016)*
- *Deutsche Bank (2014)*
- *Danske Bank (2014)*
- *Fonds de compensation (FDC), Luxembourg's national pension fund (2014)*
- *Dutch pension fund PFZW (2014)*

Source: [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net), AFSC & Who Profits [www.whoprofits.org/company/hapoalim-bank](http://www.whoprofits.org/company/hapoalim-bank)

## GENERAL DYNAMICS

- Sixth largest arms company in the world.
- Provides Israeli military with weapons systems and munitions - including artillery shells, bombs and gun systems for F-16 jets.
- Manufactures (with Boeing) radar arrays for the F-15 fighter jet and gun systems for the new F-35 fighter jet.
- Supplied Israel with armour and parts for Bradley Fighting Vehicles and, since 2011, manufactures Israel's newest Namer armoured personnel carriers for the military.
- In 2009, General Dynamics formed a joint venture with Elbit Systems to sell versions of the Israeli company's UAV drones Hermes and Skylark to the Department of Homeland Security and to military clients in the U.S.

Pension Funds  
that invest in  
General  
Dynamics



### *Divestment resolutions:*

- *Olgethorpe University Student Senate (2015)*
- *Students at UC Los Angeles (2014)*
- *University of Michigan at Dearborn's Student Council (2010)*

Source: [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net) & AFSC [www.investigate.afsc.org/company/general-dynamics](http://www.investigate.afsc.org/company/general-dynamics)



- A U.S. company with an aviation division that manufactures engines for military and civilian aircraft.
- GE engines are used in Israel's primary air and naval military platforms, including T700-GE-700 engines in the UH-60 Black Hawk, T700-GE-701 engines for Boeing A-64 Apache helicopters, and the CH-53D/E engine in the CH-53 Heavy Lift helicopter.
- A GE LM2500 gas turbine is used in Israel's naval missile ship, the Sa'ar 5 (used to enforce Israel's siege of Gaza).
- GE supplies Israel directly with various equipment and services. Between 2008-2013, GE provided Israel with gas turbines, jet engines, support services, and other military accessories.

**Pension Funds that invest in General Electric**

**Fife Pension Fund**  
Administered by Fife Council

North East Scotland  
**PENSION FUND**

**Scottish Borders COUNCIL**

*Divestment resolutions:*

- *College Council of the University of Chicago, Vassar Student Association (2016)*
- *University of California Santa Cruz student government (2015)*
- *Students at UC Los Angeles, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, Loyola University, University of Michigan Dearborn (2014)*

**Source:** [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net) & AFSC [investigate.afsc.org/company/general-electric](http://investigate.afsc.org/company/general-electric)



- In 2015, Hewlett Packard underwent major restructuring, however, their involvement in Israel's occupation continues through DXC Technology and Hewlett Packard Enterprise.
- DXC Technology operates a Research and Development (R&D) Center in the illegal settlement Beitar Illit.
- Facilitating demolitions of Palestinian homes - DXC Technology is establishing a system to help track "unauthorised" Palestinian construction in the West Bank. Based in the Beit El military base and involves work on the Palestinian population registry and permit system.

**Pension Funds that invest in DXC / HP**



*Divestment decisions and resolutions include:*

- *The Unitarian Universalist Association (2016). Friends Fiduciary Corporation, the socially responsible investment firm serving over 300 Quaker institutions in the United States (2012). The US Presbyterian Church (2014). The United Church of Christ (US) (2015). The United Methodist Church began engaging with HP in 2008. Four regional conferences voted to divest from it in 2013.*

**Source:** [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net), AFSC & Who Profits [www.whoprofits.org/content/what-we-know-about-hp-so-far](http://www.whoprofits.org/content/what-we-know-about-hp-so-far)

**Dumfries & Galloway, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands Pension Funds** invest in pooled funds. Contact [info@timetodivest.net](mailto:info@timetodivest.net) for more information.

## FAQs

### Q: Are these the only complicit companies my pension fund invests in?

A: No, the full list of companies is available on [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net). In order to ensure our pension funds adhere to basic principles of ethical investment we would encourage you to look at the companies in this pamphlet that we have identified in each fund and focus on them. If you log your activity via [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net) we can advise you of progress and of when we start to target other companies.

### Q: The Pension Fund manager claims that fiduciary duty requires them to maximise returns and ignore ethical considerations. Is this the case?

A: No, this is a misinterpretation of the law. Pension fund trustees have a fiduciary duty to invest “in the best interests of members and beneficiaries” but the phrase ‘duty to maximise return’ is absent from any UK statute or case law. Pension trustees have discretionary powers; provided they have taken advice and are able to explain and justify their decision-making process can make decisions based on ethical and human rights considerations (Martin v City of Edinburgh, 1995).

- **More information and sources on fiduciary duty:** [www.timetodivest.net/fiduciary-duty/](http://www.timetodivest.net/fiduciary-duty/)

### Q: So who makes the decisions about how my local authority pension invests its funds?

A: The Pension Fund Committee has overall responsibility to administer and manage your pension fund on behalf of the administering Council. The Committee, whose members are elected Councillors, is responsible for appointing and instructing fund managers to ensure investments are made according to fund ethical and socially responsible investment policies.

- **More information:** [www.timetodivest.net/who-makes-the-decisions/](http://www.timetodivest.net/who-makes-the-decisions/)

### Q: How can I make sure my pension no longer invests in complicit companies?

A: There are several steps to ensuring your pension fund divests from companies found to be complicit in Israel’s illegal occupation – starting with those highlighted in this briefing!

1. Write a letter to your Councillors. Use the campaign online facility [www.coordin8.org.uk](http://www.coordin8.org.uk) – you can amend and personalise before sending.
2. Raise the issue at your union branch and discuss with other members. UNISON, GMB and Unite all have representatives on your Pension Fund Board, whose responsibility is to assist the Pension Committee with compliance and ensure it takes into account interests of stakeholders.
3. Raise the issue with your employer. Representatives of the largest employers on the scheme also sit on the Pension Fund Board. If your employer does not have a place on the Pension Board, you can ask that they raise the matter directly with the Pensions Committee and at the next pension fund AGM.
4. Start or join a **Time to Divest** campaign in your branch or locality. Get in touch with Unison Scotland International Committee, Time to Divest, Scottish PSC or Scottish Friends of Palestine to get further information, resources or if you want to organise a workshop/briefing on Palestine, BDS and the **Time to Divest** campaign.

- **For resources and updates on divestment news visit:** [www.timetodivest.net](http://www.timetodivest.net)

### **BDSmovement.net**

The website of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), a wide coalition of the largest Palestinian organisations, trade unions, networks and NGOs. Read the BDS Call here: [www.bdsmovement.net](http://www.bdsmovement.net)