

# CULTURAL BOYCOTT



## Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

*Building effective solidarity with the  
Palestinian people*

# Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign

Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign was established in September 2000 in response to the second Palestinian uprising (intifada) against Israeli colonisation, occupation and apartheid. The Scottish PSC has members, branches, and affiliates across Scotland. We are a volunteer organisation, wholly dependent on donations to finance our activities.

Our aims:

- 1 A complete withdrawal of all Israeli military and paramilitary forces from the areas occupied by Israel in 1967**
- 2 The right of all Palestinian refugees ethnically cleansed from their homes and their descendants to return to their homes or the areas from which they were driven, in line with UN Resolution 194.**
- 3 An end to the Zionist project of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians.**
- 4 Self-determination for Palestinians.**
- 5 Equal rights for Palestinians living in Israel.**

We work to build effective solidarity with the Palestinian people, with a generally sympathetic Scottish public at every level of Scottish society.

## Call for a Cultural Boycott of Israel

Since April 2004, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), a key part of the BDS National Committee (BNC), has called upon intellectuals and academics worldwide to “comprehensively and consistently boycott all Israeli academic and cultural institutions as a contribution to the struggle to end Israel’s occupation, colonisation and system of apartheid.”

Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel  
(PACBI) 6 July 2004

*We, Palestinian academics and intellectuals, call 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, colonisation 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 organisations;*
- 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.*

## **Brand Israel**

**The apartheid regime in South Africa used sport to engage with other countries and to cover up the reality of life for the majority black population.**

Today, Israel uses culture as a way of masking ongoing occupation, siege and oppression.

By funding artists to travel abroad the Israeli government requires them to act as ambassadors for the apartheid regime; to sign a contract binding artists to speak positively about Israel; and crucially to never disclose the details of the contract.

Israel opposes cultural boycott claiming the issue is one of freedom of artistic expression, but they work to systematically deny those rights to Palestinians.

They do not want the rest of the world to think of Israel as a country which denies basic freedoms, so they spend vast sums every year to promote the "brand".

In 2015 the Israeli Culture Minister made clear that funding to arts companies who not in support of "Israel" would be cut.

***"We will send well-known novelists and writers overseas, theatre companies, exhibits. This way you show Israel's prettier face, so we are not thought of purely in the context of war."***

*Arye Mekeel, Israeli Foreign Ministry, 2009*

## **Attack on Palestinian cultural workers**

**Dance, music, theatre and art lie at the heart of Palestinian culture and heritage. As well as the ethnic cleansing of the land, Israel is determined to erase Palestinian culture.**

**At the same time as funding Israeli artists to promote "Brand Israel" abroad, there are systematic attacks on Palestinian culture.**

- In 1987, Israeli authorities closed the cinema in East Jerusalem, the theatre remained closed until Palestinians reopened it in February 2012.
- In 2002, Israel prevented Palestinian poets Zakaria Mohammed and Ghassan Zaqtan from traveling to Ireland to read their work.
- In 2002, Israeli soldiers attacked the Al Rowwad cultural and theatre training center in Bethlehem, vandalising the theatre and destroying equipment.
- In May 2009, Israeli soldiers prevented the opening of the Palestine Festival of Literature in Jerusalem.
- In 2009, the Israeli authorities banned numerous Palestinian cultural and educational events scheduled to celebrate the declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of Arab culture for that year.
- In 2009, Israeli security forces placed Jaffa-based Palestinian theatre worker Samieh Jabbarin under house arrest for 10 months for his political activism, only freeing him after an extensive public campaign.

- In April 2011, the venue hosting the final event of that year's festival was attacked with tear gas by the Israeli army.
- In summer 2011, Israeli commandos assaulted the Freedom Theatre in occupied Jenin, arresting several of its members.



- On June 6, 2012, Nabil Al Ra'ee, the Artistic Director of the Jenin Freedom Theatre was taken from his home and detained by the Israeli army, who refused to tell his wife where they took him or why he was being detained.
- On June 30, 2012, the Ramallah Orchestra was forced to cancel a concert at Saint Anne Church in Jerusalem after Israeli authorities refused to grant West Bank Palestinians the special permit needed to enter the illegally-annexed city.

## Artists boycotting Israel

### A host of famous artists refuse to perform in Israel.

Following a visit to the West Bank, Pink Floyd's Roger Waters became an outspoken supporter of the cultural boycott.

***"..we, in the nonviolent Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, will win this one against the similarly racist and colonialist policies of the Israeli***

***government of occupation. We will continue to press forward in favour of equal rights for all the peoples of the Holy Land. Just as musicians weren't going to play Sun City, increasingly we're not going to play Tel Aviv. There is no place today in this world for another racist, apartheid regime."***



The late Iain Banks refused to allow his books to be published in Israel.

***"The BDS campaign for justice for the Palestinian people is one I would hope any decent, open-minded person would support.***

***Gentile or Jew, conservative or leftist, no matter who you are or how you see yourself, these people are our people, and collectively we have turned our backs on their suffering for far too long."***



## Cultural boycott in Scotland

**As the home of the Edinburgh Fringe, the largest arts festival in the world, performing in Scotland is important to Israel in its attempts to present its "prettier side".**

Scottish PSC has organised a number of high profile actions and campaigns against Israeli state supported events over recent years.

**Jerusalem Quartet** - Charges against 5 members of Scottish PSC dropped with the Sheriff commenting that they had clear rights under the European convention on human rights to protest a state's behaviour.

**Batsheva** - Protests every night of performance, inside and outside the hall. Patrons return tickets.

**Edinburgh Stills Gallery** - Funding returned to Israeli Embassy following approaches from Scottish PSC.

**Edinburgh International Film Festival**

- In 2009 Hilary Clinton intervenes in a failed attempt to reverse a successful Scottish PSC campaign which led to the EIFF returning money to Israel's embassy. In 2006 a similar campaign forced the EIFF to return money to the Israeli Embassy

**Incubator Theatre** - Month long run at the Edinburgh Fringe cancelled after just one performance because of Scottish PSC protests during the 2014 attacks on Gaza.





**Pola Dance Group** - Fringe performances cancelled despite intervention of Israeli culture ministry.

As a result of our action, artists funded by the state of Israel know they are not welcome. Performers told the Haaretz newspaper in August 2015.

***"No Israeli group, at least not one with any government funding, is planning on being there."***

***"To be fair, it's like Disney World for theatre in Edinburgh. There's so much to see. When I arrived I thought it was a dream. But by the end, it was just traumatic."***

Our actions have been reported across the world and Israel knows that Edinburgh does not welcome their attempts to "whitewash" their apartheid regime.



## **BDS - the call from Palestinians 2005**

"We, representatives of Palestinian civil society, call upon international civil society organisations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. We appeal to you to pressure your respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. We also invite conscientious Israelis to support this Call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace."

**1. Ending its occupation and colonisation of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall.**



**2. Recognising the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality.**

**3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.**

# What next?

For more information on cultural boycott, email [campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk) or visit [www.no2brandisrael.org](http://www.no2brandisrael.org)

Scottish PSC has members and branches across Scotland and holds regular meetings as well as special events.

We also produce briefings on a wide range of topics as well as a regular newsletter and updates. If you would like to find out more about our work and how you can help, get in touch by emailing us [campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk](mailto:campaign@scottishpsc.org.uk) or you can telephone us on **0131 208 1948**.

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

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*Building effective solidarity with the Palestinian people*

Scottish PSC is an extension to the Palestinian struggle for freedom against Israel's programme of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Palestine. SPSC exists to channel public opposition to the Zionist settler colonial project into an effective and dynamic Scottish component of the global campaign that sends a powerful message of solidarity with the Palestinian people and a warning to Israel that its crimes must end.



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