



The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) is a wide coalition of the largest Palestinian mass organizations, trade unions, networks and organizations.

BNC member organizations:

Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine

Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO)

Palestinian Nat'l Institute for NGOs

Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition

Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS)

Federation of Indep. Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Workers

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Women

Union of Palestinian Farmers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Teachers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Writers

Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUUPE)

Union of Professional Associations

Gen. Union of Palestinian Peasants

Union of Public Employees in Palestine-Civil Sector

Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (STW)

Nat'l Committee for Grassroots Resistance

Pal. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

Nat'l Committee to Commemorate the Nakba

Civic Coalition for the Defense of Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem
Coalition for Jerusalem

Union of Pal. Charitable Organizations

Palestinian Economic Monitor

Union of Youth Activity Centers-
Palestine Refugee Camps

Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Initiative

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Veolia, major target of Palestinian BDS campaign, in financial crisis

- * French multinational to cut back global operations after €67.2 million losses
- * BDS campaign has cost Veolia large contracts across Europe
- * Losses comes on heels of Agrexco's financial woes, another main BDS target

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 8 August 2011

Only days after losing out on another lucrative contract in London, French waste and water company Veolia on Thursday announced it would scale back its operations in several countries after a surprising first-half net loss of €67.2 million.

The news came less than two weeks after Israeli agricultural exporter Agrexco, another main target of the Palestinian civil society-led, global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, faced a bankruptcy hearing in a Tel Aviv court.

Veolia has been a major target of the BDS campaign due to its involvement with several Israeli projects that blatantly violate international law, including the infamous light rail project linking illegal colonial settlements in occupied Palestinian territory with Jerusalem.

"Veolia is paying the price for its involvement in Israel's policies of occupation and apartheid against the Palestinian people," said Jamal Juma'a, coordinator of the Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (Stop the Wall), which is part of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC). "The company has been losing contracts left, right and centre, to the tune of billions of dollars. No matter how large, no corporation can absorb such huge and sustained financial losses". Odeh added, "This is bound to trigger loud discontent among Veolia's shareholders, eventually leading to a stern demand for an immediate end to the company's complicity in illegal Israeli projects."

After persistent local campaigns all over Europe, Veolia has lost out on many waste collections contracts, especially in the United Kingdom and Ireland, where Palestine solidarity activists led the efforts. BDS campaigners have been targeting local councils and municipalities demanding that contracts with Veolia be dropped due to its "grave misconduct".

The latest such victory came on Wednesday in Ealing, West London, after the council failed to select Veolia for a comprehensive tender for its domestic refuse, street cleaning and parks maintenance contract. Veolia had been given the previous parks maintenance contract.

Activists had written to and met with councillors, detailing Veolia's involvement in the illegal Israeli occupation. The contract would have been worth approximately £300 million over 15 years – one of Ealing Council's largest single contracts.

Sarah Colborne, Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) Director, said in a press release: "Veolia's loss of this contract, following its failure in a number of significant bids in Britain and internationally, is a clear sign that Veolia is paying a high price for its complicity in Israel's occupation and violations of international law."

The Wall Street Journal reported Friday that Veolia "announced a corporate overhaul of the company that includes divestitures and a significant geographic scale-back". They also reported Veolia's disclosure of 2007-2010 accounting fraud in the US, amounting to €90 million.

Company officials are reported to have said the scale-down is related to "financial



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difficulties encountered by Veolia's customers".

Israeli company Agrexco has also suffered acute financial problems that have led to bankruptcy proceedings, and calls for the company to be broken up. Like Veolia, Agrexco top managers also attributed their losses to markets and other financial factors, deliberately omitting any mention of the evident impact of the boycott.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The Palestinian BDS National committee (BNC):
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NOTES FOR EDITORS:

- The Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) is a coalition of Palestinian civil society groups. It was formed as the Palestinian reference point in the broad campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), which resulted in the July 2005 Palestinian Call for boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel, with the initial endorsement of over 170 Palestinian organizations.
- Source of Veolia news: "Veolia Posts Loss, Plans Shake-Up", The Wall Street Journal, 5 August.
- The Jerusalem Light Rail tramway that Veolia is involved in building and operating is explicitly designed to cement Israel's grip on illegal West Bank settlements and tie them more firmly into the state of Israel. Veolia also operates other settlement infrastructure projects: It runs bus services for Israeli settlers on settler-only roads linking the settlements with Israel. These roads have decimated Palestinian towns and villages by stealing their land for construction and cutting them off from each other. Through its subsidiary TMM, Veolia also collects refuse from illegal settlements at buries it at the illegal Tovlan landfill site in the occupied Jordan Valley. For more background: <http://www.bdsmovement.net/activecamps/veoliaalstom>
- In June, Israeli financial publication Globes reported "heavy losses" for fresh produce company Agrexco, as they struggled to manage debt. Fruitnet.com recently reported the company owed creditors €106 million. Partly-owned by the Israeli government, Agrexco is responsible for 60-70% of the agricultural produce grown in Israel's illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territories (OPT). For more background: <http://www.bdsmovement.net/activecamps/agrexco>