

Don't Collaborate with Apartheid – a call from Palestinian civil society on European universities, academics, students and people of conscience

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The State of Israel practises a system of occupation, colonialism and apartheid over the Palestinian people, but it does not do so unaided. Israeli military companies are the main enablers of Israel's persistent and grave violations of international law. They provide the weaponry and technology that allow Israel to commit atrocities and daily violations of human rights, and they directly participate in the construction of Israel's Apartheid Wall, declared illegal by the International Court of Justice on 9 July 2004.¹ Israeli universities and research institutes are deeply involved in military research and weapons development projects that put them at the heart of planning and implementing Israeli war crimes.²

Palestinian academics, students and civil society organisations therefore deplore the extensive research collaboration that takes place between European universities and Israeli military companies, universities and research institutes that are complicit with Israeli violations of international law and human rights. We call for an immediate end to all research collaboration with Israeli military companies and all Israeli research institutions that are involved in violating international law and human rights.

The research collaboration that is facilitated by the EU-Israel Association Agreement is of particular concern. The Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) is a multi-billion euro European Union research funding scheme that provides funds for universities and companies from different countries to work together on specific research projects. As a result of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, and despite Israel's consistent violation of the Agreement's human rights clause, Israeli military companies and research institutions are granted access to FP7 on an equal footing as those from EU member states.³

Israeli military companies such as Elbit Systems and Israeli Aerospace Industries, both of which contribute to the ongoing construction of Israel's illegal Apartheid Wall and both of which supplied drones that were deployed by Israel to kill civilians during Operation Cast Lead, receive public funding from the EU and collaborate with European universities through their participation in FP7 projects.⁴ Deeply complicit Israeli academic institutions such as Technion, notorious for its role in developing weapons used in Israeli massacres of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians, participate in 'security' projects that could clearly assist them in the development of technologies and knowledge used to oppress Palestinian rights.⁵ Even Ahava, the Israeli cosmetics company that has been subjected to a highly effective international boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign focused on its location in and partial ownership by the illegal Israeli settlement of Mitzpe Shalem, participates in FP7 projects, granting it access to public funds and partnering it with universities in the UK, Italy, the Basque and beyond.⁶ Such involvement of so deeply complicit companies and universities clearly violates the European Union's own guidelines for participation in FP7 projects.

European universities and research institutions that conduct joint research with Israeli military companies or other organisations that assist the suppression of Palestinian rights provide the material and political support that enable and embolden Israel to continue infringing upon international law with impunity. Not only does such joint research provide a false veneer of normalcy to institutions at the heart of Israel's colonial system, but it is also likely to directly build on and further support the development of technology and techniques used to violently suppress Palestinian human rights. Far from existing in an "apolitical" bubble, joint research of this kind directly contributes to the injustices and violations of international law and basic rights faced by Palestinians. It makes these European

universities and research centers *directly complicit* in violating international law and human rights.

The nature of Israeli participation in FP7 projects provides further proof of the need for the EU to cancel the EU-Israel Association Agreement and impose a comprehensive military embargo on Israel and for European universities and research institutions to:

1. Immediately end all research collaboration with Israeli military companies and all Israeli research institutions that are involved in violating international law and human rights
2. Develop policies and mechanisms to ensure no further such collaboration can take place and ensure their effective implementation

We call on academics and students and their union organisations, human rights and solidarity organisations and people of conscience across Europe to:

1. Work with the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC), the largest Palestinian civil society coalition, to identify and expose research collaboration between European universities and Israeli military companies and all Israeli research institutions that develop expertise and technology used to suppress Palestinian rights or are otherwise complicit with Israeli violations of international law, particularly where this collaboration taking place within the FP7 scheme⁷
2. Develop long-term, effective mass campaigns capable of successfully pressuring European universities and research institutions to end their complicity with Israeli Apartheid and implement policies to prevent further such collaboration

Signed by:

**Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC)*
Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)
Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUPE)
Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign – Stop the Wall (STW)
Palestinian Students' Campaign for the Academic Boycott of Israel (PSCABI)**

*The BNC is a wide coalition of the largest mass civil society organizations, unions, networks and political parties.

To learn more about this campaign and for assistance with investigating the collaboration with complicit Israeli organisations taking place at your university, please contact info@bdsmovement.net

¹<http://www.bdsmovement.net/2011/military-embargo-working-paper-7517>

²<http://www.bdsmovement.net/2009/academic-boycott-aic-5181>

³According to research published in November 2010, no non-EU country has received more funding per capita than Israel and Israel is especially overrepresented in the security theme of the research program.

⁴<http://www.statewatch.org/news/2010/nov/russell-tribunal--on-palestine-ben-hayes.pdf>

⁴www.bdsmovement.net/2011/stw-european-funding-7939

⁵www.bdsmovement.net/2011/stw-european-funding-7939

⁵<http://www.bdsmovement.net/2011/mcgill-concordia-technion-7102>

⁶For details about Ahava and the campaign against it see <http://www.stolenbeauty.org>

For information about the FP7 projects in which Ahava is involved see

http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP7_PROJ_EN&QZ_WEBSRCH=ahava&QM_PJA=&USR_SORT=EN_QVD+CHAR+D_ESC

⁷The European Union maintains a database of all FP7 projects at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html