

Statement In Support of the Resolution Submitted by the BDS Caucus

Friends,

When structures of oppression receive our unwilling financial support, we must take a stand. Palestinian university teachers, labor unions, and students under Israeli occupation have called for our solidarity. The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions resolution will push back against our complicity as union members, UC employees, and students from apartheid in Palestine.

The BDS call, made by Palestinian grassroots organizations, aims to restore Palestinians' human rights for: 1) Refugees forced to flee Palestine in 1948 and subsequently due to Israeli military violence and ethnic cleansing who are barred from returning to their lands; 2) Those facing the 47-year military occupation and ongoing land confiscation in the West Bank and blockade in Gaza; and 3) Palestinians inside Israel facing second-class citizenship due to over 50 ethnically discriminatory laws that heavily restrict access to property ownership, education, and other resources for Palestinians.

By voting YES, we defend steadfastly the universal value of human dignity and equality. We maintain that Palestinian lives are as valuable as Israeli lives. We demand an end to the occupation of Palestinian lands; we support full equality for Palestinians in Israel; and refugees' right of return as stipulated by international law and U.N. Resolution 194.

By voting YES, we honor our union's commitment to political action and community mobilization. We will continue educating our communities of racism against Arabs, Muslims, Jews and people of Middle Eastern background, and stand against all forms of discrimination. We continue Local 2865's solidarities with other anti-racist, anti-colonial labor and student movements globally; thus our opponents' claim that we're singling out Israel is patently false. Rather than dictating the form of our solidarity to any aggrieved people, we must try to express it in whatever form those people deem necessary to better their conditions, whether boycotts, sympathy strikes, petitions, or organizing actions to support students and workers from Chile to South Africa to workers here. Yet Israel constantly requests that we excuse its apartheid practices when we would do so for no other country.

By voting YES, we affirm our solidarity with all those striving for peace with justice for all the land's inhabitants. We join student governments of UCSD, UCI, UCR, UCB, UCSC, and UCLA in calling for divestment from Israeli apartheid. We stand by members of all national origins and religions who demand a situation where all people live with dignity regardless of religion, ethnicity, or other identity.

Some who stand to lose their privilege argue we must not meddle in "controversial affairs". Some argued this during Jim Crow segregation: they were wrong! Some argued this to support South African apartheid: they were wrong! Some argue this to support raising tuition and entrenching education as an upper-class, racist privilege: they are wrong!

Years from now, when peace with justice is under way in Palestine, you will look back and think, "I made the right decision. I stood in solidarity during the most difficult times."

Friends, it's time to finally be counted on the right side of history! Vote YES on BDS!