

Should Queen Mary University of London support the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement?

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What do you want?

1. We are asking for Queen Mary to publicly endorse and support the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement.
2. We would like a report on the direct and indirect academic, economic, and corporate links Queen Mary and its affiliated institutions and companies have with organizations complicit in the Israeli regime.
3. Subsequently, a plan to divest from the ties identified in the report - from brands sold in campus stores, such as Coca Cola, to partnerships with QinetiQ.
4. The Student Union to create a team to work on the university's complicity, and create a program to actively promote the boycotting, divesting, and sanctioning of Israel's illegal apartheid regime as compliance with international law.

Why do you want it?

The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement is a Palestinian led movement which peacefully challenges international support for Israel's violations of international law. It is a campaign which targets complicity not identity, a boycott that targets institutions not individuals, and a route towards meaningful solidarity.

It is important to adopt it for the following:

1. Queen Mary's 'The Race Equality Action Group' (REAG) is committed to 'address[ing] race equality issues' thus recognising BDS is a further extension of challenging inequality.
2. To promote accountability for brands that are complicit and profit of the illegal occupation of Palestinian land.
3. To publicly reject the illegal occupation of Palestinian land, and hold companies that operate in these illegal territories accountable, in line with universities such as: the London School of Economics, University of Manchester, and City University who have already done so.

What impact will this have?

As we have seen from previous BDS motions the impact of boycotting can be long lasting such as the Anti Apartheid (South African) movement, in which British students forced the hands of Barclays Bank in 1986 to divest in South Africa - notably one of the dominoes in the demise of the South African apartheid.

Yet while comparisons between BDS and the demise of South African apartheid can be made, fundamentally whilst our university is complicit in the Israeli illegal apartheid, we are enabling apartheid to become 'a way of life'. Only through fruitful solidarity that targets economic, academic, and corporate profiting of the Israeli illegal occupation can Queen Mary fulfil its commitment to equality by recognizing its current complicity in the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality.

