

2014-08-47 Report from the Ad Hoc Working Group on Justice in Palestine and Israel and the 2013 Special Interest Group on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)

The Clerk read a statement from this group, as attached in Appendix 4. Canadian Yearly Meeting approves the following as an addendum to the CYM policy statement on advocacy for peace in Israel and Palestine (Minute 78 from CYM 2009):

- 1) We authorize Canadian Friends Service Committee, Ottawa Monthly Meeting, and well-informed individual Friends to make information on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions available to Monthly Meetings and individual Friends who request it and/or feel led to participate in some way.
- 2) We call upon the Canadian government to require that products made in the illegal settlements be accurately labelled as such.
- 3) We encourage Canadian Friends, individually and corporately, to boycott products of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including those wrongly labelled as "made in Israel."

We are reminded to pray for peace with justice between the people of Palestine and Israel to facilitate peace in the Middle East and peace in the world. Contact Mel Earley of Halifax Monthly Meeting for further suggestions on how we as individuals can assist this work for peace and justice. Mel urges us to do more than what we have done by approving this minute.

Appendix: CYM agenda item on BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) in support of justice in Palestine and Israel

In March of 2010, Friends in Ramallah, occupied Palestine, wrote, as part of their epistle to Friends everywhere: "We ask Friends to discern what, in their own circumstances, they can best do to support those working to end this conflict and bring peace and justice to this troubled region. We ask Friends to consider adopting boycott, divestment and sanctions as we may be led to do, individually or corporately."

Early in 2013, CFSC circulated a proposal for an addendum to the existing CYM Policy Statement on Advocacy for Peace in Israel and Palestine (minute 78, CYM, 2009). The draft addendum proposed for minute 78 expressed support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions Campaign as a non-violent measure advocated by those working to bring an end to the conflict and lasting peace to the region. It included the request: "*We ask CFSC to provide an information channel to support Friends' engagement.*"

At that time, 9 meetings of those that sent a response had responded positively to some part of what they'd been sent, but Friends did not seem ready to reach unity on a broad statement supporting the specific goals of the official BDS Campaign.

Then, at a SIG facilitated by Gianne Broughton of CFSC, at CYM 2013, it became clear that many Canadian Friends were, in fact, comfortable with the idea of specifically boycotting products of the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. A simplified minute on BDS was produced by an ad hoc [working] group, and, following CYM 2013, was circulated to monthly meetings and worship groups as part of the report from a second SIG held that week on the topic.

That minute states:

As an addendum to the 2009 CYM policy statement on Israel and Palestine, the ad hoc Working Group on Justice in Palestine and Israel proposes:

In the spirit of the BYM minute (5.4.11, Meeting for Sufferings), which notes that “The request for boycott comes from those who will suffer most, but a decision for boycott will give hope to Palestinians and support to those in Israel who are working for peace.” And that “Our hearts are full of compassion for Israelis and Palestinians, all of whom are suffering from the effects of the occupation,” and in response to the March 2010 Epistle from Ramallah Friends, requesting that Friends: “. . . consider adopting boycott, divestment and sanctions as we may be led to do, individually or corporately,” that we ask that CYM:

a. Encourage Canadian Friends, individually and corporately, to boycott products of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including those wrongly labelled as “made in Israel.”

b. Call upon the Canadian government to require that products made in the illegal settlement be accurately labelled as such.

c. Authorize CFSC, Ottawa MM, and well-informed individual Friends to make information on BDS available to MMs and individual Friends who request it and/or feel led to participate in some way.

Monthly meetings were asked to minute their unity with any or all of the 3 points and a tally is being kept.

The ad hoc working group feels strongly that Canadian Yearly Meeting needs to respond to the request from our Friends in Ramallah (see first paragraph of this report) to join the BDS campaign in support of Palestinian human rights.

A FAR-FROM-COMPLETE SAMPLING OF RESOURCES ON BDS

A FEW QUAKER RESOURCES:

[HTTP://BDSQUAKER.WORDPRESS.COM/](http://BDSQUAKER.WORDPRESS.COM/) includes 2010 Epistle from Ramallah Friends Meeting and minutes of Britain YM, Netherlands YM, Illinois YM, inter alia.

[HTTP://AFSC.ORG/STORY/BOYCOTT-DIVESTMENT-AND-SANCTIONS-EXPLAINED](http://AFSC.ORG/STORY/BOYCOTT-DIVESTMENT-AND-SANCTIONS-EXPLAINED)

and other material on BDS on afsc.org)

WWW.QUAKERPI.ORG with minutes and statements of MMs and YMs in the US, Canada, and Europe.

JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING SETTLEMENT-PRODUCT BOYCOTT:

A RECENT ARTICLE BY TYLER LEVITAN OF INDEPENDENT JEWISH VOICES - CANADA IN AN OTTAWA PAPER STATES: "BOYCOTTS OF SODASTREAM ARE SPREADING THROUGHOUT WESTERN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES, AND ARE NOW GAINING GROUND ACROSS CANADA. INDEPENDENT JEWISH VOICES CANADA, THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA, DISTRICT AND PROVINCIAL LABOUR COUNCILS, HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS AND STUDENT GROUPS HAVE CALLED ON THEIR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS TO STOP BUYING SODASTREAM, AND TO CALL ON RETAILERS TO STOP SELLING IT." SEE [HTTP://IJVCANADA.ORG/2014/BOYCOTT-SUPPORTS-JUST-PEACE-IN-PALESTINE-AND-ISRAEL/](http://IJVCANADA.ORG/2014/BOYCOTT-SUPPORTS-JUST-PEACE-IN-PALESTINE-AND-ISRAEL/) AND OTHER INFORMATION AT IJVCANADA.ORG.

JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE (US):

[HTTP://JEWISHVOICEFORPEACE.ORG/CAMPAIGNS/SODASTREAM-BURST-THE-BUBBLE](http://JEWISHVOICEFORPEACE.ORG/CAMPAIGNS/SODASTREAM-BURST-THE-BUBBLE) and other information at jewishvoiceforpeace.org.

UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA: "UNSETTLING GOODS CAMPAIGN" (SODASTREAM, AHAVA COSMETICS, KETER PLASTICS) [HTTP://WWW.UNITED-CHURCH.CA/GETINVOLVED/UNSETTLING-GOODS](http://WWW.UNITED-CHURCH.CA/GETINVOLVED/UNSETTLING-GOODS) see also <http://www.unjppi.org> (network of United Church folks especially active on this issue)

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH GENERAL BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY in the US is the latest to join the boycott of settlement-produced SodaStream home carbonation products [HTTP://UMC-GBCS.ORG/PRESS-RELEASES/SOCIAL-JUSTICE-AGENCY-ISSUES-CALL-TO-BOYCOTT-SODASTREAM](http://UMC-GBCS.ORG/PRESS-RELEASES/SOCIAL-JUSTICE-AGENCY-ISSUES-CALL-TO-BOYCOTT-SODASTREAM)

GROWING WORLDWIDE SUPPORT FOR BDS, INCLUDING SETTLEMENT BOYCOTT: <http://www.bdsmovement.net/timeline>

<http://www.canadianboycottcoalition.ca> Canadian organizations currently focusing on boycott of settlement-produced SodaStream products; includes alternatives to SodaStream.

COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF COMPANIES (WORLDWIDE) THAT SUPPORT AND/OR BENEFIT FROM THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION: <http://WWW.WHOPROFITS.ORG> (AN INITIATIVE OF THE ISRAELI COALITION OF WOMEN FOR PEACE, NOW A SEPARATE BODY)

FOR AN OCCASIONALLY UPDATED LIST OF WEBSITES relevant to the situation in Palestine and Israel, with a focus on nonviolent resistance actions and participation/

witness by folks living outside the region, please see

[HTTP://REFUSINGTOBEENEMIESTHEBOOK.WORDPRESS.COM/USEFUL-WEBSITES/](http://refusingtobeenemiesthebook.wordpress.com/useful-websites/)