

Minutes and Statements of Quaker Meetings & Organizations

Calling for Economic Action to End Israel's Occupation*

Ann Arbor Monthly Meeting (MM) Minute – 2011

We believe that one key step towards stability and safety for both Israelis and Palestinians depends on a just agreement regarding the Palestinian lands that Israel has occupied, illegally, according to international law, since 1967.

We urge Friends worldwide to unite with Britain Yearly Meeting in its call to boycott products made in Israeli settlements, “not as punishment or revenge, but as an external pressure to achieve change.”

In order to exert more than symbolic pressure on the Israeli government to negotiate a just peace at this critical time, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting joins with religious and civil society organizations throughout the world in a boycott of corporations that support the Israeli military.

Holland, Michigan MM Minute – 2013

The sense of our meeting is that a boycott of products made in Israel's West Bank settlements can be an appropriate signal to Israel of our encouragement to compromise. Another appropriate signal is financial divestment from U.S. and other companies that support the ongoing military occupation and repression of the Palestinian people. Holland Friends Meeting supports the efforts by AFSC, Britain Yearly Meeting, Illinois Yearly Meeting, and many other Monthly Meetings as well as other religious and civic groups to advocate for peace via the above actions, and we encourage LEYM to adopt similar policies.

Swannanoa Valley (NC) MM–2013 (Also presented to Southern Appalachian YM for consideration in 2014)

As members of the Religious Society of Friends who believe that all women and men are our sisters and brothers we are led to respond to the cries of suffering of the Palestinian people by supporting the boycott campaign until the Occupation has ended and the basic human rights of those living under the intolerable conditions of this Occupation are secured.

In support of Palestinian justice, as well as in support of a peaceful and lasting resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we encourage our members and all citizens not to buy products (eg. Soda Stream, Ahava cosmetics, etc) made in the West Bank settlements.

Britain Yearly Meeting (YM) for Sufferings Minute -- 2011

In the face of the armed oppression of poor people and the increasing encroachment of the illegal settlements in the West Bank, we cannot do nothing...We are clear that it would be wrong to support the illegal settlements by purchasing their goods. We therefore ask Friends (Quakers) throughout Britain Yearly Meeting to boycott settlement goods, until such time as the occupation is ended.

BDS Earlham -- 2011

Earlham College students from different backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences declare their support for BDS Earlham, a campaign to encourage Earlham to divest from companies materially supporting or profiting from Israeli violations of International law and the universal principles of Human Rights.

Lake Erie YM – 2013

A key step towards stability and safety for both Israelis and Palestinians, and other indigenous peoples of the region, depends on a just agreement regarding the Palestinian lands that Israel has occupied, illegally, according to international law, since 1967.

Therefore, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting calls for Friends to join the boycott of products made in Israel's illegal West Bank settlements and to divest from companies that support Israel's military occupation and repression of the Palestinian people.

We join with the American Friends Service Committee, Britain Yearly Meeting, Monthly Meetings, and religious and civil society organizations throughout the world in taking such steps in working for peace.

Colorado Springs MM Minute -- 2012

We, Colorado Springs Friends Meeting, Religious Society of Friends, embrace the spirit and support the goals of the We Divest Campaign of the American Friends Service Committee... As Friends who value our testimonies of Peace, Equality, Community, Integrity and Simplicity and strive to live by them, we unite with the AFSC campaign. We see the campaign as an example of speaking truth to power – in this case to the power of unjust profit – both as individuals and as a Meeting. We recognize that peace in the Middle East is dependent upon true justice for Palestinians and so seek to support all nonviolent efforts to further that cause.

Sandy Spring (MD) MM Minute – 2012

Our Meeting has a significant portion of its reserves invested in Friends Fiduciary's Consolidated Fund. We appreciate that in deciding on investments for the Consolidated Fund, Friends Fiduciary Corporation is guided by its principles of Socially Responsible Investing. Consistent with these principles, the Meeting asks Friends Fiduciary to divest from companies that support and profit from violence of any kind in the Israeli Palestinian conflict.*

**For purposes of identifying such companies we recommend the American Friends Service Committee document "Companies Violating AFSC's Israel-Palestine Investment Screen."*

Illinois YM Minute -- June 2011

The Illinois Yearly Meeting of Religious Society of Friends united with the concern brought both by St. Louis Monthly

Meeting and Blue River Quarterly Meeting, to urge American Friends Service Committee to seek for the TIAA-CREF pension funds to divest from 5 corporations whose business and/or products oppose Palestinians.

St. Louis (MO) MM Minute – March 2011

Palestinian civil society organizations have asked for support of a boycott, divestment and sanctions action (BDS) against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, until Israel complies with international law. The St. Louis Religious Society of Friends affirms the nonviolent nature of the BDS movement and its support of the fundamental equality of all parties in this conflict. We see BDS as a challenge to discriminatory Israeli state policies that diminish the humanity of another people. It is a nonviolent challenge to political systems and institutions, not individuals, that deny the equality of Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

Blue River Quarterly Meeting (QM) Minute – April 2011

St. Louis Friends have sent a letter to AFSC asking them to encourage TIAA-CREF to divest from...a bus company [Veolia] that only serves the settlements and not the Palestinians, a company [Northrop Grumman] that provides weapons to Israel, Caterpillar which sells bulldozers specifically outfitted for military use such as bulldozing homes and orchards, and Motorola which designs and sells surveillance systems to Israel...BRQ unites with the statement of St. Louis Friends and will both contact AFSC to express our concern and take the concern to ILYM sessions this summer asking that they also unite with this statement.

American Friends Service Committee Investment Screen – 2008-2013

On March 8, 2008, AFSC's Board approved an affirmative investment screen specific to Israel-Palestine...This is a policy designed to prohibit the investment of AFSC resources in companies that benefit from the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank...

or that are involved in or facilitate Israeli or Palestinian acts of violence.

In 2009, Jewish Voice for Peace launched the "We Divest" campaign, demanding TIAA-CREF stop investing in corporations that enable the destruction of Palestinian homes and orchards, the expansion of Israeli settlements and infrastructure, checkpoint surveillance of Palestinian communities, and provide weapons used against civilians.

In June 2010, the AFSC Board of Directors officially endorsed Jewish Voice for Peace's efforts to call on TIAA-CREF to divest, and joined the national effort of people of conscience...by supporting Palestinians and Israelis who are engaged in nonviolent resistance to the occupation. Over 20,000 people have now signed the petition to TIAA-CREF on the web: wedivest.org.

Netherlands YM Minute – 2012. We are calling on one another to boycott the products of the (illegal) settlements on the West Bank wherever possible.

Our Letter to Friends Worldwide: ...We wholeheartedly endorse the call from the *Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)* to our government to undertake actions that will end the occupation. This call demands:

- A total import ban on goods from the settlements in the occupied areas, which are illegal according to

international law

- An end to all arms sales to the Israeli government
 - To call a halt to any intensification of the bilateral relations with the Israeli government until such time that government demonstrates respect for human rights and international law.
- Kees Nieuwerth, Clerk

Statement re: Friends Fiduciary Corp -- 2013

Ann Arbor Friends welcome the decision by Friends Fiduciary Corporation (FFC) in 2012 to drop its holdings in Caterpillar Corp, Hewlett Packard, and Veolia Environment, companies listed on the investment screen developed by AFSC to avoid support for products and services used in violence against civilians in Israel and Palestine. We invite LEYM Friends to join us in expressing thanks to FFC for this compassionate action. Nancy Taylor, AAFM

Lake Erie YM – 2008

Letter to Presidential Candidates Obama and McCain:

As part of your campaign for President, you have recently pledged support for Israel, and for an Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker) shares your desire for a resolution to the conflict so that both Israelis and Palestinians can live together in peace...At the heart of much of the discussion of conditions for a peaceful resolution of the conflict is the idea of a “two-state” solution, an Israeli state and a Palestinian state side by side on the territory of historic Palestine. There are a number of obstacles, however, that together make such a solution well-nigh impossible. The central impediment is the massive settlement process, whereby in contravention of international law Israel has built settlements exclusively for Israeli Jewish citizens throughout the territories occupied in the 1967 war, on land expropriated from Palestinian inhabitants. These settlements together with the network of “bypass roads” which connect the settlements with each other and with Israel proper and are off-limits to most Palestinian traffic make up what one Israeli analyst refers to as “the matrix of control.” As long as this matrix of control is in place, cemented by a military occupation with its checkpoints and a myriad of other regulations that govern every aspect of the Palestinians’ lives, there can be no viable Palestinian state....We hope that you will keep these considerations in mind, both as a candidate and as the one who ultimately is elected President.

Shirley Bechill, Presiding Clerk, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

Interfaith Boycott Coalition – Mission Statement -- 2012

We are a coalition of faith networks and organizations that represent Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and other traditions. We are all committed to ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine and violations of international law. Toward this end, we join the growing international call, coming from within the faith community and outside of it, for the boycott of companies profiting from Israel’s occupation of Palestine and violations of international law.

IBC members include:

Church of the Brethren

Jewish Voice for Peace

Presbyterian Church (USA) IP Mission Network

American Muslims for Palestine Network

American Friends Service Committee

Episcopal Peace Fellowship PI

United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network

United Methodist Kairos Response

Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East

Members of the Catholic, Lutheran, Quaker, and Mennonite denominations.

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***NOTE:** For complete texts of Minutes, Statements, and Letters excerpted here see <http://www.quakerpi.org/Q-Action.shtml> or send your request to agr1@me.com