

Dame Nancy Rothwell, President and Vice-Chancellor
Paul Redmond, Director of Student Life
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

cc. BDS Movement, University of Manchester

27 March 2017

Dear Dame Nancy and Dr Redmond,

Two of our students from the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement are facing disciplinary hearings this week (29th March) due to carrying out a banner drop on the Samuel Alexander building which read 'Stop Arming Israel'.

This action occurred on March 2nd as part of the activities of Israeli Apartheid Week. The students drew attention to the University of Manchester's contravention of its own Policy for Socially Responsible Investment in investing in companies such as Caterpillar, who supply armoured bulldozers for the Israel Defence Forces, vehicles used to raze Palestinian homes in the occupied territories, and in collaborating with Technion Institute of Technology, leaders in the research and development of hi-tech weaponry for the IDF.

Such investments and collaborations by the University lend credibility and infrastructural support to Israel's occupation, a regime 'sustained by the same three pillars of apartheid that were once maintained in South Africa: the designation of a racialized identity with preferential legal status (whites in South Africa, Jews in Israel and the occupied territories); the fragmentation of territory for the purposes of segregation and domination; and the maintenance of "security" laws directed against one population (blacks, Palestinians) for the protection of the racially privileged group' (Saree Makdisi, 'Architectures of Erasure', *Critical Inquiry*, 2010). Indeed, as Makdisi continues, the structure of apartheid is even more complete in the occupied territories, for its function here is not to control, circulate, and exploit black labour *within* society, but to *separate, contain, and remove* Palestinians in the onward expansion of Israel's land-grab.

The University should applaud these two students for drawing attention to the hypocrisy of abetting Israel's apartheid regime while professing a socially responsible investment policy. Instead, we see with dismay that they are to be subject to disciplinary hearings.

We the undersigned members of the academic community at the University of Manchester appeal to you in the strongest terms: 1) to withdraw completely the threat to discipline these students; 2) to make swift moves to divest the University from firms that abet the apartheid regime of Israel; and 3) to meet the University's obligation to respond to the two Freedom of Information requests

by the BDS Movement (due on 3rd and 7th April) to present publicly the full extent of the University's financial involvement with companies who invest in Israel.

Yours sincerely,

Manchester UCU Executive Committee
UNISON, University of Manchester
Dr David Alderson
Zahra Alijah
Professor Mona Baker (Emerita)
Dr Naomi Baker
Dr Lauren Banko
Dermot Barr
Dr Anke Bernau
Dr Howard Booth
Professor Erica Burman
Dr Bridget Byrne
Dr Niall Carson
Dr Tanzil Chowdhury
Emma Clarke
Dr Michelle Coghlan
Alessandro Columbu
Dr Steven Courtney
Dr Jerome de Groot
Professor Laura Doan
Professor Mike Donmall
Professor Jeanette Edwards
Professor Aneez Esmail
Dr Douglas Field
Dr Molly Geidel
Dr Kevin Gillan
Leah Gilman
Professor Hal Gladfelder
Dr Ingrid Hanson
Dr Ben Harker
Dr Bethan Harries
Professor Penelope Harvey
Dr Malcolm Hicks (retired)
Dr Andrew Irving
Dr Stef Jansen
Dr Andrew Jones
Dr Steven Jones
Paul Kelemen, Honorary Research Fellow
Frances Leviston
John McAuliffe
Dr Peter McMylor
Professor Roseanne McNamee (retired)
Professor Miguel Martinez Lucio

Dr Stefania Marino
Dr Orieb Masadeh-Tate
Professor David Matthews
Dr Vanessa May
Dr Robert Meckin
Lydia Merryll
Dr Dalia Mostafa
Professor Khalid Nadvi
Dr Adel Nasser
Dr Richie Nimmo
Dr Michelle Obeid
Dr Monica Pearl
Professor Luis Perez-Gonzalez
Dr Eithne Quinn
Dr Madeleine Reeves
Professor Chris Roberts (Emeritus)
Dr John Roache
Dr Emily Rohrbach
Dr Michael Sanders
Kate Sapin
Dr Fred Schurink
Dr Tony Simpson
Dr Graham Smith
Dr Robert Spencer
Professor Jackie Stacey
Dr Nicholas Thoburn
Dr Petra Tjitske Kalshoven
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Dr William Turner
Dr Anastasia Valassopoulos
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