

The GA Call to Boycott: Who, What, When, Where, Why

At its July 2012 meeting the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) spent considerable time discussing actions that it could take to help further the peace process between Israel and Palestine. After much study, discussion, and prayer regarding the prospect for peace between Israel and Palestine, the 2012 General Assembly passed a resolution that:

- Calls upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.
- Directs the Stated Clerk to communicate this action to all other PC (USA) councils and entities and invite and strongly encourage those groups and organizations to endorse this boycott until significant progress toward Palestinian rights and independence can be reported to the General Assembly or General Assembly Mission Council.

This call for a boycott of products from illegal settlements on Palestinian land is consistent with past church endorsements of boycotts as a vehicle to help resolve serious situations of social justice and oppression. It is an effort to promote a just and sustainable peace for Jews, Muslims and Christians in Israel and Palestine. The boycott is not against people or the state of Israel; it is against specific Israeli government policies and practices that destroy hope for a just settlement to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

The purpose of this document is to give the context for the General Assembly call for boycott of products made in illegal settlement colonies in Occupied Palestinian Territories and to ask individuals, churches, and presbyteries to take actions to implement this boycott.

Context for the General Assembly call for boycott of products

The Presbyterian Church has repeatedly affirmed Israel's right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders in accordance with United Nations resolutions. The church also supports a "two state solution" as the basis for a peace settlement in which there is an Israeli state and a Palestinian state that are each economically viable and geographically contiguous.

However, there is great international concern, shared by the current U.S. President and state department, that the construction of Jewish-only settlement colonies in the occupied West Bank, which are illegal under international law, could effectively kill the "two state solution." The 2010 GA added its voice to this concern by passing the statements below. This document includes 3 maps that can be used as a reference to give the geographical context for these statements, which refer to the 1967 boundary between Israel and Palestine, Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine, the separation barrier, the "two state" solution, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

The 2010 General Assembly of the PC (USA):

- Recognizes the daunting and mounting obstacles to the viability of a "two-state solution," and affirms with great urgency the historic Presbyterian stances with specific regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- The church calls for:
 - an immediate cessation of all violence, whether perpetrated by Israelis or Palestinians;
 - the end of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and diversion of water resources;
 - an immediate freeze both on the establishment or expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and on the Israeli acquisition of Palestinian land and buildings in East Jerusalem;
 - the relocation by Israel of the Separation Barrier to the 1967 border;
 - the withholding of U.S. government aid to the state of Israel as long as Israel persists in creating new West Bank settlements;

- continuing corporate engagement through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment with companies profiting from the sale and use of their products for non-peaceful purposes and/or the violation of human rights;
- a shared status for Jerusalem;
- equal rights for Palestinian citizens of the state of Israel;
- the cessation of systematic violation of human rights by any party; specifically, practices of administrative detention, collective punishment, the torture of prisoners and suspects, home demolitions and evictions, and the deportation of dissidents;
- the immediate resumption by Israel and Palestine of negotiations toward a two-state solution.

A quick look at the maps included in this document shows how the illegal settlement colonies, the bypass roads that connect them, and the Separation Wall imprison Palestinians in isolated enclaves, eviscerate the Palestinian economy, and prevent the creation of a viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent Palestinian state.

Why Target Products from Illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories?

Under international law the military occupation of one country by another country is supposed to be a temporary condition during war time. The Fourth Geneva Convention prohibits an occupying power from transferring its civilian populations to occupied territory and also prohibits from extracting resources from occupied territory. The occupying power is encouraged to help establish a viable, stable government in the occupied territory that can govern when the occupying power leaves.

The United States fought in World War II for four years. Millions of its citizens died or were wounded. The U.S. occupied Japan and part of Germany after the war. Yet it complied with international law by helping rebuild those countries, establish stable governments, and ended the occupations within five years. In 1967 the Israeli army fought a six-day war in which it occupied the West Bank of Palestine, which was then under Jordanian control, and Gaza, which was under Egyptian control. Yet, forty-five years later, this “temporary” occupation not only still exists, but also becomes more oppressive each year.

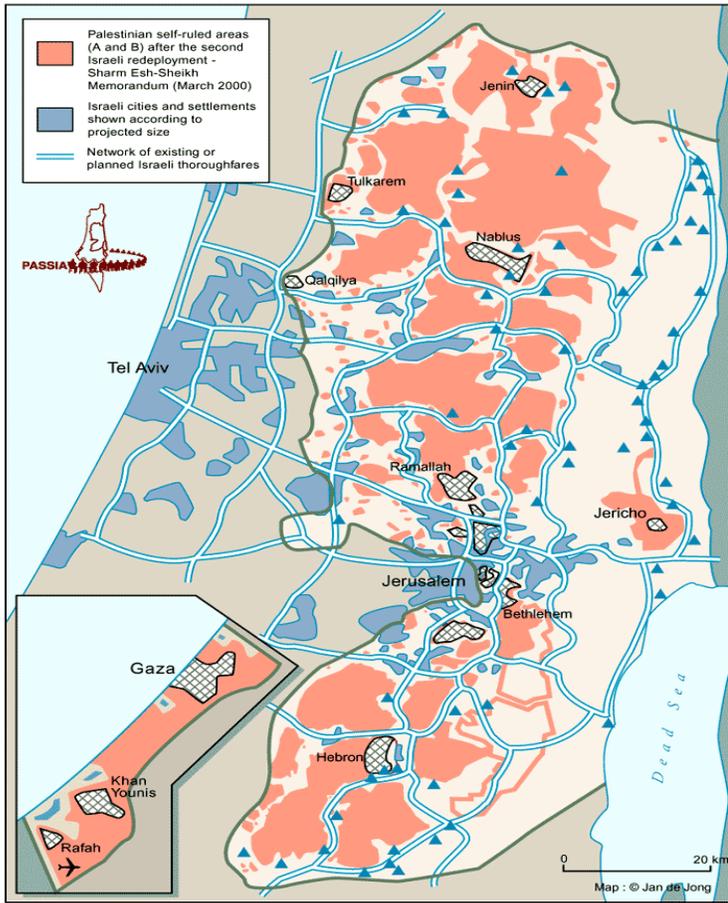
Boycotting products from illegal Israeli settlement is one way to say “enough is enough.” It is a concrete action that can be taken to put pressure on the Israeli government to follow international law and end the expropriation of Palestinian land, the construction of illegal Jewish-only settlement colonies, and the military occupation of Palestine.

Page 4 of this document is a guide to “Occupation-Free Shopping.” It is helpful in identifying products that should be targeted for boycott. It should be noted that the PC (USA) call for a boycott of settlement products is very limited and targeted. It is not a boycott of all Israeli products nor is it a boycott of all companies that are located in or do business with Israel. But boycotting settlement products is an important beginning action. Ahava’s Dead Sea minerals are exactly that – resources illegally extracted from occupied territory. The other products on the boycott list are also from companies that exploit Palestinian land, resources, and/or labor.

The PC (USA) settlement product boycott is a call for action on our part

The PC (USA) has forcefully spoken out for many years to end the occupation of Palestine and human rights abuses. These calls have been unheeded because they have no power. A selective boycott is a non-violent way to press for change. It is an action to give force to the PC (USA) statements that the occupation of Palestine must end. And it is a vehicle to educate ourselves and others about the facts on the ground in Palestine. Ultimately, it is that education process that will have the most profound effect in U.S. and world public opinion.

4/22/13



Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA)

Map 1: Settlements and Bypass Roads

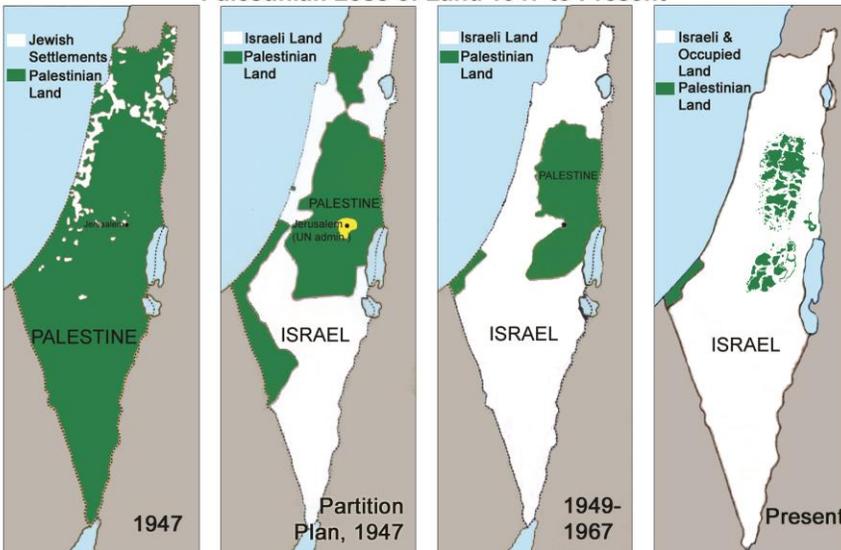
The blue triangles are illegal Israeli settlement colonies. The roads are Jewish only by-pass roads linking the settlement colonies with Israel which allow unrestricted settler movement but no access to Palestinians. The roads have fences or walls that prohibit crossing them except at checkpoints. The roads thereby form a grid of physical barriers that prohibit Palestinian movement and confine Palestinians to 64 isolated enclaves



Map 2: Settlements and the Separation Wall

The separation wall (blue line) is not on the internationally recognized Israel and Palestine boundary (the 1967 border). Instead, it envelopes large swaths of Palestinian West Bank territory, including the largest drinking water aquifers. The blue triangles represent illegal Israeli settlements.

Palestinian Loss of Land 1947 to Present



Map 3: Palestinian Loss of Land

The green area represents Palestinian land. The large area on the 3rd map is the West Bank and the smaller area is Gaza. The white area is land in Israel or Palestinian land in the West Bank that is occupied by Israel, but where access is denied to Palestinians.

Occupation-Free Shopping

Take these products off your shopping list THEY ARE MADE IN ILLEGAL ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

At its July 2012 meeting the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church (USA) called for the boycott of all Israeli products made in the occupied Palestinian Territories and called upon all nations to prohibit the import of products made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land.

You can heed that call by not buying the products below and telling others about the boycott of products made in illegal settlements.

AHAVA COSMETICS: cosmetics products using Dead Sea minerals: moisturizers, creams, bath salts, etc.

The company factory and visitors' center are in an illegal Israeli settlement, Mitzpe Shalem, in the occupied West Bank. These products are sold at Macy's, Nordstrom's, Bed Bath & Beyond, Marshall's, TJ Maxx, Target, Lonely Planet, Zappo's, Amazon.com, BeautyBridge.com, DermStore.com, SkinOne.com, VitaCost.com, Soap.com, Makeup Alley, Birchbox.com, and Ulta Health and Beauty, among other places. See Code Pink website for more information <http://www.codepink4peace.org/section.php?id=415>

SODASTREAM: home carbonated beverage machines and syrups

The main plant of the company is in the industrial zone of Mishor Edomim (also spelled Adumim, Adomim, or Edummim), an illegal settlement in the West Bank. Products are sold at Amazon, Bloomingdale's, Bed Bath & Beyond, Best Buy, Bon Ton, Crate & Barrel, Costco, HyVee, JC Penney, Kitchen Collection, Kohl's, Le Gourmet Chef, Macy's, Meijer, Sears, Shopko, Staples, Sur la Table, Target, Williams-Sonoma, and SkyMall, among other places.

INTERSTAR, TIP TOP, AND EDUSHAPE TOYS: modular plastic toys, building pieces

These products are made in the Barkan Industrial Zone, part of an illegal settlement in the West Bank. Attached to the residential settlement of Ariel, Barkan was established in 1982 on the land of the Palestinian villages of Haris, Bruqin and Sarta. The industrial zone hosts a disproportionate number of factories that pollute the environment. For example, waste from Barkan runs down the hillside of the Al-Matwi Valley, damaging Palestinian farmland. Palestinian laborers are employed in the industrial zone and are paid, as documented in several sources, below the minimum wage and denied the right to unionize. The products are shipped to Edushape USA. They are sold at Toys R Us, Amazon, Walmart, Muni Toys, and other locations.

KETER PLASTIC PRODUCTS: garden furniture, outdoor storage solutions and sheds, shelving systems and utility cabinets, tool boxes and storage products for the Do-it-yourself (DIY) market, as well as household, baby and toddler products.

Both Keter and its full subsidiary, Lipski, have factories in the Barkan Industrial Zone (see above). The products are sold at Ace Hardware, Amazon.com, BJ's Wholesale, Costco, Home Depot, Menards, Lowe's, Orchard Supply Hardware, Sam's Club, Sears, Walmart, Wayfair, Bed Bath & Beyond, Target, True Value Hardware, Northern Tools, PepBoys, and other locations.

Keter is licensed to use the name **Black & Decker** and sells under that name the following products: Black & Decker Storage Building, SpaceRite Cabinets, and the Workmate series of storage containers.

WINERIES LOCATED IN ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS in the Palestinian Territories or the Golan Heights:

For a list:

http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/main/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=232

For more information, see individual product information sheets.