5 A critical and historical assessment of Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) in Palestine

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Introduction: a brief history of the BDS movement

Palestinians have engaged in unarmed resistance against an avowedly colonial Zionist project since 1880 when they began to respond to increased Jewish immigration into Palestine from Russia and Europe. That unarmed resistance continues to the present day. The Zionist movement was founded in the late nineteenth century, and its growth accelerated under the British mandate (1918–1948) which set out to deliver on the Balfour Declaration (1917) and its favourable view of 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people' (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2013). The Zionist project has necessitated the transformation of the land of Palestine from an area that had a predominantly non-Jewish population into a 'Jewish state' (Qumsiyeh 2004, 2012). The 'Jewish state' was founded in 1948 by force of arms, was expanded in 1967, and has continued to displace and impoverish local Palestinian populations to this day (Pappé 2004; Qumsiyeh 2004; Roy 2001). Throughout this period, Palestinian populations have been relegated to ever shrinking areas of land, and native Palestinians have responded by resisting Zionist tenure and hegemony. This chapter will survey the history of this Palestinian resistance, and will focus, in particular, on efforts to initiate boycotts, divestment, and sanctions as forms of unarmed resistance to the Zionist project.

Early resistance movements were not concerned with an economic boycott of Jewish colonies since Jewish people had limited economic interactions with the native Palestinians. Instead, popular resistance to Zionism during the Ottoman era took the form of petition-writing and demonstrations (Qumsiyeh 2012). For example, in 1886, villagers from Al-Khdaira and Malbas protested verbally against the expansion of the settlement of Petah Tikva, and were successful in persuading the Ottoman government to restrict the settlement of those who had entered the country as tourists and overstayed their three-month entry visas (Mandel 1976). Verbal protests in 1890 were followed by a petition, signed by Muslim and Christian notables, which was presented to the Grand Vizier on 24 June 1891 in Jerusalem; it called on him to prevent foreign Jews from purchasing Palestinian lands (Al-Kayyali 1990, pp. 66–67). Given that their Ottoman rulers responded to such tactics, Palestinians had little motivation to employ additional tactics of resistance against the small

and marginal Zionist colonies that existed during this period. This situation changed after the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and the subsequent British occupation of Palestine.

In the second half of May 1918, the Arab flag and the Arab national anthem of revolt were adopted by the Palestinian national movement despite objections by the British. These moves were followed in the first week of June 1918 by the establishment of a number of nationalist organizations, most notably in Jaffa and Jerusalem. The first boycotts under British rule commenced after the appointment of the first Zionist ruler of Palestine, Herbert Louis Samuel, on 30 June 1920. Mass resignations from government positions ensued, including that of the famous Khalil Sakakini. Calls for boycotts were common and widely disseminated among educated Palestinians. Writing in Al-Difa' on 15 January 1935, Sami Al-Sarraj urged his readers to join this form of protest: 'Come oh Arabs let us disobey the laws one time. Come ye writers let us disobey the laws without worry about what the legal system will do to us [. . .] and ye Arab, there is nothing that forces you to buy products of foreigners and certainly not products of your enemies' (Mahaftha 2000, p. 67).

The uprising that took place from 1987 to 1993 also included highly successful boycott actions (Qumsiyeh 2012). The third declaration of the United Leadership of the Resistance issued on 18 January 1988 called for a boycott of all Israeli products for which local alternatives could be sourced; a tax strike, and other methods of popular resistance, were also recommended. This uprising had a significant negative impact on the Israeli economy in the areas of agriculture, tourism, construction, and military expenditure (Rosen 1991). However, following the uprising and the signing of the Oslo Accords, the political structure of Israel has continued to drift further to the right. Recent governments have passed more laws that discriminate against non-Jews in the 'Jewish state' and, in the 2015 legislative election, right- and ultra-right-wing parties increased their seats in the Knesset to form a majority under Prime Minister Netanyahu. These political developments offer little hope for the repeal of more than fifty laws which discriminate against non-Jews inside the borders established for the State of Israel in 1949 (Adalàh 2012), or for the rescindment of hundreds of military orders which discriminate against Palestinians who are subject to Israeli rule in the areas occupied in 1967 in the West Bank and Gaza (Kirshbaum 2007).

The acceleration of BDS: 2005–2015

Calls for BDS, at local and international levels, have been invigorated since the beginning of the Palestinian uprising (2000–2005) by worsening political and social conditions in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). BDS efforts were propelled by Israel's ongoing violations of the international humanitarian laws that govern occupied areas and of the International Court of Justice's (2004) ruling on the illegality of Israel's Separation Wall. On the anniversary of the ICJ's ruling, Palestinian civil society issued a call to action

which featured an initiative that went on to become known as the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC). Initially signed by 171 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the BNC's call has since been endorsed by NGOs across Palestine, Israel, and the world. The resulting BDS movement calls for the use of methodologies of resistance, similar to those used in South Africa under apartheid, until Israel complies with the following international and humanitarian obligations:

1 Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall;
2 Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
3 Respecting, protecting, and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.

(BDS 2016)

As noted by McMahon (2014, p. 78), 'The BDS campaign is a networked contestation of the discourse of Palestinian-Israeli politics. The call's first demand about ending colonization, for example, fits together matrix-like with the longer historicizing encouraged by the call's third demand. This is the source of its effectiveness, its power'. The backlash the campaign has provoked confirms the power of these demands which cannot be reconciled with continued violations of the human rights of native Palestinians. Three significant aspects of the boycott will now be surveyed to illustrate the reach and effects of the BDS movement: these are the academic and cultural boycott, church participation in BDS campaigns, and broader economic boycotts and sanctions.

Academic and cultural boycotts

Calls for an academic boycott were first made in the United States (US) in February 2002 and in the United Kingdom (UK) in April of that year. The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) was launched in April 2004 following a statement issued by Palestinian academics and intellectuals in October 2003. In this public statement, the founders of PACBI articulated the vision and direction of the movement and focused on a number of key concerns: these were the Nakba (the forced dispossession and eviction of Arab Palestinians during the 1948 Palestine war), occupation and colonization, and racial discrimination (PACBI 2008). An open letter calling for academic boycott was signed by over 120 academics, led by Steven and Hilary Rose in the United Kingdom, and this letter was published in *The Guardian* in April 2002 in response to Israeli occupation and violence. These campaigns quickly gathered over 1,500 signatures from academics in Europe and North America who pledged to boycott Israeli educational institutions. Since then, thousands more academics around the world have joined the campaign (USACBI 2014).

A growing number of scholars are justifying the strategy of academic boycott and contest any arguments that it violates the principles of academic freedom (Baker and Davidson 2003; Butler 2006; Doumani 2006; Makdisi 2003). Even inside the United States, where there is significant support for Zionism, there has been tremendous growth in the number of academic boycotts (USACBI 2016a). This form of protest gained a significant boost when the renowned physicist Stephen Hawking withdrew from a conference that was to be held in Israel in 2013 (Cressy 2013; Davidson and Jad 2004). Desmond Tutu has argued that interaction with academics in Israel 'can never be business as usual. Israeli universities are an intimate part of the Israeli regime, by active choice. While Palestinians are not able to access universities and schools, Israeli universities produce the research, technology, arguments and leaders for maintaining the occupation' (PACBI 2008). Tutu made this statement shortly before the University of Johannesburg cut ties with Ben Gurion University of the Negev. In May 2015, the student council presidents of five South African universities issued a statement explaining why student groups at the University of South Africa, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Durban University of Technology, Mangasutho University of Technology, and the University of the Western Cape were joining the boycott of Israel. Academic boycotts of Israeli institutions are justified by participants on the grounds that Israeli academic and cultural institutions are directly complicit in perpetuating apartheid (Barghouti 2011; Davidson and Jad 2004; Rose and Rose 2008). Participants cite, as an example of that situation, the fact that Arabic Studies departments at Israeli universities often lack Palestinian faculty members (Gould 2013).

In the cultural arena, dozens of performers have cancelled appearances in Israel to comply with the BDS call (for a list of cultural boycott supporters, see USACBI 2016b). For example, the May 2015 cancellation of a Lauren Hill performance in Tel Aviv resulted from a campaign that included thousands of signatures, letters from fans, creative videos, and songs. The importance and effectiveness of academic and cultural boycotts had already been made clear in South Africa where these forms of action played a key role in securing the end of apartheid in the 1990s (White 2015; Younis 2000). Momentum for change grew there when members of the country's cultural elites such as academics, artists, and athletes were no longer welcomed in Western capitals but instead were faced with signs calling on them to 'end apartheid' and 'free South Africa'.

The academic boycott in the Palestinian context has been promoted on the grounds that, as well as raising awareness, it promotes long overdue debates about Israeli policies in the conflict. BDS discussions grow in influence when they are included in journals like the *British Medical Journal* (Hickey 2007) or *Nature* (Cressy 2013) because these debates, conducted in the spirit of academic freedom and free speech, provide an important sense of legitimacy for the academic boycott overall (Rose and Rose 2008; USACBI 2016a). High-profile sophisticated debates about BDS in respected publications help to establish the campaign's credibility. They also encourage other respected professionals, such

as scientists, engineers, and artists, to establish positions on the issues, which are based on peer-reviewed information, as well as their own consciences.

Church participation in BDS

The first organized Palestinian boycotts of Zionist settlements were initiated by Christian-Muslim associations formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Qumsiyeh 2012). This boycott movement accelerated during the British occupation (1918–1948) and involved significant leadership contributions from the religious community and women's groups (Mogannam 1937). In recent decades, the Israeli government has oppressed both Christians and Muslims in the occupied Palestinian territory, and acts of resistance conducted by Christian Palestinians have continued to be rooted in their theological understanding of their role in the struggle (Ateek 1990; Chacour 2003; Raheb 1995), as well as in secular political ideas (Mogannam 1937). For decades, Christian and Muslim groups tended to act in isolation, but, during the 1987–1993 uprising, Palestinian Christian denominations joined other faith-based communities in supporting calls for BDS made by groups like the United Leadership of the Uprising.

This coordination was advanced dramatically in December 2009 when a Christian Palestinian initiative was launched by the group Kairos Palestine. The Kairos Palestine document, setting out the groups' goals, was entitled *A moment of truth: a word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering* (Kairos Palestine 2016); it was inspired by the original Kairos South Africa document which had been circulated to churches around the world in 1985 to promote BDS actions grounded in faith, hope, and love (Kairos Palestine 2012, 2016). The Kairos initiative promoted the idea that religion can and should play an active and positive role in helping people to achieve peace combined with justice: 'Kairos offers a truly prophetic human vision, a vision that continues to see – and insists on seeing – the image of God in all people, whether occupiers or occupied' (Kairos Palestine 2016). Churches around the world began divestment actions related to their church pensions and other holdings. Some successes started to accumulate after 2004 and included church divestment from companies, such as Caterpillar, which are complicit in the violence committed against Palestinians (Clarke 205).

Economic boycotts and sanctions

This section provides a basic overview of consumer boycotts and government sanctions in the struggle against structural inequalities in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory. A significant amount has been written about the Arab boycott of Israel. The first boycotts were implemented shortly before the formation of the State of Israel, and their use accelerated in the following three decades (Iskandar 1966; Losman 1972). Primary boycotts were directed at Israeli companies, while secondary and tertiary boycotts were implemented

against companies that did business in Israel. These boycotts forced Israeli apo ogists to push for anti-sanction legislation in the United States congress fro 1959 onwards, and, in 1977, an amendment to the Export Administration A stated that if companies were to comply with the Arab boycott, they wou be in violation of the law. This statute also requires companies to report a requests for them to participate in boycotts, and, in 2006, US companies sub mitted a total of 1,291 reports on boycott-related requests (Weiss 2007).

It should be noted here that regional boycotts did appear to have an effe on Israel. Fershtman and Gandal (1998) have shown that, after the signing the Oslo Accords, the Israeli economy benefited from a so-called peace div dend. In some cases, even before sanctions were implemented, policy reversa were enacted in order to comply with demands. For example, in 1979, th threat of sanctions by Arab League states forced the Canadian government reverse its decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem (Ripsman and Blanchar 2002). Unfortunately, significant normalization of Israeli occupation throug the Oslo process has contributed to the erosion of effective international gov ernmental sanctions.

In 1988, more countries recognized the state of Palestine than those that ha diplomatic relations with Israel. An increase in the economic development Israel was prompted by the Egyptian President Sadat in the 1970s, and furth encouraged by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) with its 1974 Te Point Program, 1988 Declaration of Independence, and 1993 Oslo Accor Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel also improved Israel's economic positio The Oslo peace process created the problematic impression that Israelis an Palestinians could negotiate their differences bilaterally under the aegis of th US government, an important supporter of Israel's position. The civil society level BDS movement described in this chapter grew in the 1990s in respons to this government-level détente (Dajani and Isma'il 2014).

Looking to the future, Crawford-Browne (2004) suggests that the mos effective types of economic sanction policy which might be pursued in th near term can be modelled after the October 1985 actions of Bishop Desmon Tutu, Dr. Allan Boesak, and Dr. Beyers Naude in South Africa. They targete the banking sector, and, since all wire transfers and interbank transfers are no carried out through the Belgium-based SWIFT system, a campaign directe at that system could carry significant sway in motivating change on the pa of Israel.

The success of the BDS campaign

The last ten years have witnessed the acceleration of BDS actions with hun dreds of NGOs, churches, unions, local governments, companies, and othe organizations and entities engaging in BDS activities across the globe. Gio (2010) usefully identifies some of the key milestones in the evolution the movement. A BDS (2016) timeline, as well as relevant names, detail of actions taken, and descriptions of activities on the academic and cultur

fronts are also available online (Corporate Watch 2016; PACBI 2008; Who Profits? 2016).

There have been some key victories for the BDS movement. In particular, the campaign against Veolia Transport and Alstom delivered significant successes when both companies were labelled complicit with the occupation and lost contracts worth several billion US dollars. The campaign against Veolia and Alstom started because both companies were participating in the construction of infrastructure for Jewish settlements in the oPt. The Jerusalem light rail system, in which both companies were involved, was constructed on illegally occupied territory. In November 2006, ASN – a Dutch bank – broke off financial relations with Veolia. In 2008, the Triodos Bank – another Dutch institution – and Stockholm Community Council joined the campaign, and Veolia suffered a multibillion dollar loss of revenue. Between 2009 and 2011, Veolia was excluded from contracts by Sandwell Council, Dublin City Council, Swansea City Council, the Greater Bordeaux local government, Edinburgh Council, South London Waste Partnership, and the Victoria State Government in Australia. In 2012, Veolia suffered another setback in the Netherlands when The Hague excluded Veolia from its public contracts for all bus transportation. A further success in this BDS campaign was confirmed when the North London Waste Authority revealed that Veolia had withdrawn its bid to manage water and fuel services for the city, missing out on contracts worth £4.5 billion. In 2013, Veolia was dropped by Sheffield University in the United Kingdom, and the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (IAA-CREF) divested from Veolia in some of its funds. Veolia and Alstrom announced in 2010 that they were ending their relationship with the Jerusalem light rail project; however, they appear likely to continue to profit from the transportation scheme for several years, and further BDS campaign action was carried out against the companies between 2010 and 2014.

Other BDS successes followed. After a number of successful campaigns against security company G4S around the world, the company announced in June 2014 that it would end its Israeli prison contracts. Palestinian and Jewish Unity launched a campaign in 2010 to make Montreal's St. Denis Street an 'apartheid-free zone' (CJPME 2016). St. Denis Street finally closed in 2014 after much media coverage of the political turmoil associated with its sale of Israeli products (CJPME 2016). A similar result was achieved against the Israeli cosmetics company Ahava, and, in 2009, the Israeli firm Elbit was dropped from the Norwegian government pension fund.

BDS initiatives have gained traction thanks to the formation and actions of groups such as US Labor for Palestine, US Labor against the War, and Artists Against the War. Meanwhile, Israel Apartheid Week has become an annual international event devoted to publicizing BDS in hundreds of campuses and cities around the world (Apartheid Week 2016). BDS campaigners have pointed to strong denunciations of Apartheid Week activities as evidence of their effectiveness. As further evidence, they have noted the Israeli government's public pronouncements about its efforts to deal with the 'threat of BDS'.

I have had personal experience of the ways in which pro-Israeli responses to BDS can open up broader discussions. I published an article entitled 'Boycott Israel' which appeared in the official online magazine of The World Economic Forum (WEF) in January 2006 (Qumsiyeh 2016a). The WEF brings thousands of political and business leaders from across the globe to Davos, Switzerland, each year to exchange information. After the article provoked complaints, Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the WEF, apologized for publishing it. The article had been posted on the WEF website, and was subsequently removed. However, Schwab's act of censorship generated such a buzz that dozens of media stories about the article and his actions were published across the globe. I suspect that few of the 5,000 world leaders who attended the WEF would have read the article had it not been for the controversy and media attention the censorship generated, and I received hundreds of letters of support, including messages from key government officials around the world, as a result of Schwab's pro-Israeli gesture.

The challenges faced by the BDS campaign

The BDS movement has achieved significant growth since 2005, and the campaign has ensured that a variety of strategies are utilized to challenge structural discrimination against Palestinians. University student senates, churches, community gatherings, cities, districts, and boards of corporations have all become spaces in which the status quo of oppression and occupation is exposed and challenged. BDS initiatives work in conjunction with other forms of resistance such as popular civil disobedience, demonstrations, and critical media work which highlight the abuses perpetrated during the occupation (Qumsiyeh 2012; Sharp 1973). Uses of the different individual components of BDS activity ebb and flow, like other forms of resistance, according to external events, and so, for example, the use of boycotts spiked during uprisings in 1921, 1929, 1936, 1974, 1987, 2000, and 2015 (Qumsiyeh 2012).

Reaction and resistance to the emerging BDS campaign movement has been strong, and a comparison with the South African experience is instructive. Criticism of the BDS movement in South Africa came primarily from corporations and politicians in receipt of benefits from the continuation of the apartheid regime. In the case of the BDS campaign for Palestinian rights, campaigners face a well-structured and international lobby system that supports the Zionist project, particularly in Western countries (Findley 2003; Mearsheimer and Walt 2007; Shahak 1997). These lobbies mobilize their grassroots networks, and commission Zionist academics and politicians to counter growing BDS sentiments.

Strong criticisms are levelled against the BDS movement by Zionist lobbies on the right, and even by some groups on the left. Zionists and their sympathizers have claimed that the BDS campaign ignores 'Jewish rights' and is inherently 'anti-Semitic' (Curtis 2012; Fishman 2012). Such claims are countered by those who argue that the vision of the BDS movement is to create equality

for all people regardless of their religions, and that this commitment involves guaranteeing rights for Muslims, Christians, and Jews in a postcolonial world (Barghouti 2008, 2011; Qumsiyeh 2012). It is worth noting that many BDS initiatives across the world are led by Jewish or predominantly Jewish organizations, and Jewish leadership and participation in these initiatives challenges the notion that BDS work is inherently anti-Semitic (Qumsiyeh 2016b). There have also been strong calls from within Israel in support of BDS. Among the Israelis who support the movement are notable authors including Uri Davis (2003), Neve Gordon (2009), Jeff Halper (2010), Tikva Honig-Parnass (2003), Baruch Kimmerling (2003), Naomi Klein (2009), Ronit Lentin (2008), Ilan Pappé (2004), Miko Peled (2012), Nurit Peled-Elhanan (2012), and Tanya Reinhart (2002). Neve Gordon (2009) explained his involvement by noting: 'Nothing else has worked. Putting massive international pressure on Israel is the only way to guarantee that the next generation of Israelis and Palestinians – my two boys included – does not grow up in an apartheid regime'.

Critiques from the political and social 'left' focus on the idea that the three conditions for ending the boycott identified by the BDS movement are not framed in clear or strong enough language to lead to decolonization. The three conditions involve ending the occupation of Arab lands, respecting and implementing the right of return for refugees, and securing equality between Palestinians and Jewish Israelis. The first condition (ending the occupation of Arab lands) is not inherently clear and has been interpreted by some to include all of Palestine and the Golan Heights. Others have interpreted it differently as being restricted to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. Some of the original formulators of the 2005 call for BDS have explained that the lack of clarity was intentional in order to avoid creating a debate about the call's relation to either a one-state or two-state solution. However, a commitment to a democratic secular state future is evident in the call's clear references to the right of refugees to return to their properties inside Israel proper, and to people's right to be treated equally regardless of religion. Indeed, BDS supporters would do well to insist and focus on the issues of 'return' and 'equality' in order to work effectively towards a positive and liveable future for all populations in the region (Qumsiyeh 2004).

Another disagreement within the BDS movement concerns whether the boycott should apply only to Israeli settlement products, or whether instead it should apply to products from Israel more broadly. Still others have argued that BDS initiatives should avoid politically contentious terms such as 'apartheid' or 'colonialism', though it is noteworthy that several of the commentators who took this position have shifted their rhetoric over time to adopt more direct and confrontational language (Davis 2003; Erakat 2010; Kimmerling 2003).

Still, the challenges posed by critiques of BDS as a strategy pale in comparison to challenges emerging from within local, regional, general and geopolitical contexts. As an example, boycott efforts in the 1936 uprising were very promising but were undercut by the efforts of feudal Arab leaders to undermine and usurp power from the grassroots movement (Qumsiyeh 2004, 2012). Similarly, over the last decade, Zionists have engaged in multiple efforts to undermine BDS efforts. One effective strategy is to infiltrate Palestinian solidarity movements in order to steer them away from BDS and from investing in structures that will allow for a future Palestinian state. Considering that as much as seventy-two percent of international aid to the Palestinians ends up under the control of Israeli authorities (Hever 2010, 2015; Murad 2014), and that many Palestinian political factions and a majority of civil society organizations called for a boycott, this international pressure towards 'positive investment' in the status quo seems to ignore voices on the ground.

A second example of a challenge to BDS concerns the consistent pressure for Palestinians to normalize relations with Israeli colonialism. This pressure began after the 1973 Arab-Israeli war with the overzealous efforts of President Sadat of Egypt, who was eager to please Israel and the United States (Safty 1991). Many authors who have studied the period that followed the 1973 war have noted the United States' decisive intervention in the course of the conflict as well as the shift in the psychology and strategy of the PLO after the war was over. The PLO's adoption in 1974 of the Ten Point Program began the process of normalizing relations with Israel which eventually culminated in the Oslo Accords signed under the auspices of the United States in 1993 and 1994 (Chomsky 1983; Finkelstein 1995; Hadawi 1998; Pappé 2004; Qumsiyeh 2004; Said 1995). I propose that BDS represents the antithesis of this normalization because 'the effectiveness of BDS as a strategy of resistance and cross-border solidarity is intimately connected with a challenge to the hegemonic place of Zionism in western ideology' (Bakan and Abu-Laban 2009, p. 29). Many supporters of BDS believe the movement's most critical benefit is that it prevents the normalization of a hierarchized colonial system; this has the effect of stressing that system and putting its operations on a defensive footing. Ultimately, this stress adds significantly to the cost of maintaining the oppression to the point where rational calculations by those in power may well lead to its complete abandonment.

A further discussion of this important topic is beyond the scope of this chapter, but there are numerous examples of what we can label the 'Oslo effect'. Some of its key components are outlined here. First, the accords, and particularly the second Oslo agreement (1994), restricted the 'interim Palestinian authority' to the extent that it was forced to act as a subcontractor for the occupation's structures in order to guarantee Israel's security (Qumsiyeh 2004; Said 1995; Weizman 2007). Second, the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations, which formed an annex to Oslo, entrenched Palestinian dependence on Israel and Israel's economic hegemony (Hever 2010). The annex also increased corruption and cronyism, enriching elites at the expense of freedom (Murad 2014; Nakhleh 2012). Third, it is psychologically devastating for those sacrificing and engaging in resistance to see those who represent Palestine undermine BDS and also profit from claiming a history of resistance. The number of NGOs and politicians that claim their actions benefit Palestinians is noteworthy. Finally, the division between Hamas and Fatah which followed the Oslo

process has significantly hampered all forms of popular resistance, including BDS (King 2007; Qumsiyeh 2012, 2015).

Conclusion

With these challenges and barriers in mind, important choices need to be made by international governments and communities in the future that will decide between a liveable political and social environment based on justice and human rights for both Palestinians and Jewish Israelis, or an environment based on the principle that 'might makes right'. The choice of 'might makes right' has created significant suffering for both Palestinians and Jewish Israelis with important and unintended consequences. Viewed through the eyes of its victims, Zionist ideology is responsible for and has fostered division and violence (Said 1978). Strategic choices about how to address the ongoing occupation, violence, and human rights violations must be carefully considered. This chapter has described the use of BDS as a key tactic within strategic efforts to achieve justice and human rights for all people residing in Israel and the occupied territory, and for the broader Palestinian population.

The evolving conflict and violence in Palestine is viewed by many commentators and scholars as the epicentre of wider conflicts in Western Asia and North Africa. This chapter has discussed the efficacy of BDS as a tool with the capacity to transform conflict in this region and strike a path away from colonialism and towards a future of peace and coexistence. The challenge for Palestinians, Israelis, and the global community now is to integrate BDS into the broader struggle and resistance against the occupation. Coalition and network-building between various groups and strategies of resistance will be crucial in future efforts to increase the leverage of every component of the campaign, including those used in BDS actions. Many campaigners believe that the use of strategies such as BDS needs to be ramped up in order to expedite the realization of justice and peace: when those things exist together, people and their livelihoods can prosper.

Of primary concern is the manner in which the BDS campaign can reverse the destructive trends set in motion by the Oslo Accords; entrenched economic inequalities alongside extensive corruption have wasted significant amounts of money and have perpetuated the status quo of oppression (Crawford-Browne 2007; Nakhleh 2012). While Israeli apartheid is far more sophisticated and entrenched than that practised in South Africa (Abdelnour 2013; Dugard and Reynolds 2013), the BDS movement is proving its ability to catch the attention of, and in some cases cause panic among, supporters of the Israeli position, as is evidenced by public statements made by the Israeli government and Zionist organizations around the world (Steinberg 2006). The BDS movement is being challenged to expand the scope of its actions into new geographic locations across the globe, and to develop new strategies and change processes. If it rises to these challenges, it will elevate the struggle against the occupation and help to realize an era in which structural inequalities are removed and full human rights for all of the people of the region will be ensured.

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