MAKE INJUSTICE A BAD INVESTMENT
PALESTINE SHRINKING EXPANDING ISRAEL

1918

UNDER OTTOMAN RULE, ZIONIST ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE JEWISH NATIONAL FUND ENGAGED IN LAND PURCHASES THROUGHOUT PALESTINE FOR JEWISH SETTLEMENT.

1947

NAZIFICATION OF LAND UNDER THE NAZI REGIME ACCELERATES ITS TRANSFER AND SALE TO ZIONIST ORGANIZATIONS, APPREHENDED BY AFRICAN INHABITANTS.

1960

FOLLOWING THE FORCED OPEN ACQUISITION, DISPLACEMENT OF OVER 750,000 PALESTINIANS FROM THE NEW STATE OF ISRAEL, MANY LANDS ARE FORCED INTO A JEWISH-MUSLIM CONFLICT.

2017

SINCE OCCUPYING THE WEST BANK AND GAZA IN 1967, ISRAEL HAS ANNEXED TERRITORY DECLARING THOUSANDS OF SQUARE MILES OF PALESTINIAN LAND FOR ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS.

SOURCE: VISUALIZINGPALESTINE. WWW.VISUALIZINGPALESTINE.ORG. MAY 2015. SHARE AND DISTRIBUTE FREELY. CREATIVE COMMONS BY-NC-ND 3.0 LICENSE.
The Geography of Palestine after Oslo Accords 1993 & 1995
THE WEST BANK
Lack of Freedom of Movement: Enforced Immobility

- Construction of the apartheid wall in 2002
- Encirclement of West Bank communities as a process of enclavization – a racialized process of closure and control that hems in populations “excluded from the settler-colonial socio-political order” (Peteet 209).
- Many Palestinians speak of these enclaves as “open-air prisons”
Israel’s elaborate system of security checkpoints, permits*, and segregated roads fortifies Palestinians’ enclosure by restricting their mobility.

All Israeli citizens can leave and re-enter the country at any time. Palestinian subjects cannot usually fly abroad from Israel’s international airport and need an Israeli permit to get to the airport in Jordan.

700+ obstacles to movement in the West Bank, many of which are checkpoints.

- **Key question:** What does the lived reality of immobility look like?

The geographer Derek Gregory explains that obstacles to movement “enforce a violent fragmentation and recombination of time and space, which is nothing less than a concerted attempt to disturb and derange the normal rhythms of everyday Palestinian life” (126).

*Palestinians in the West Bank or Gaza need a permit to travel between the “units” of Palestinian territories. Israel has held Gaza under blockade since 2007, prohibiting movement in or out except for rare cases it defines as humanitarian.
Case Studies

- After Israel denied her a permit to travel to Jerusalem for a work opportunity, Selma, a Palestinian woman, proclaimed,

  “I don’t want to be excited about anything that involves the future because you don’t know if it will really happen. Our whole life is like this – not knowing if something will really happen” (qtd. in Peteet 70).

- Rania, another Palestinian woman, explains that while visiting her family should take 25 minutes, having to go through checkpoints increases it to a 3 hour journey!

- “You can’t plan your day… I am always nervous and crying because I want to see my family. I want to be in touch with them…To live like normal people live. But checkpoints and the wall have made visiting my family so difficult” (qtd. in Peteet 40).
Effects of Enforced Immobility

● Hence, Israel is enforcing “calibrated chaos” onto Palestinians by transforming ordinary movements, such as visiting family, into acts “of subterfuge, patience, and cunning, an obstacle course to the negotiated and mastered anew every day” (40).

● In this way “trust in the predictability of everyday life”, and in the future, “is shattered, replaced by anticipation, and anxiety” (Peteet 40).
Delays at Checkpoints Can Be Fatal...

Israel/Palestine: Woman Dies after Checkpoint Delay
Sealed Roads to Hospital Raise Freedom-of-Movement, Rights Concerns

Pregnant Palestinians give birth at Israeli checkpoints
GAZA
• According to the United Nations, **56% of Gaza’s population** is living in **poverty**.

• **54%** are **food insecure**.

• **97%** of the **water** from the Gaza aquifer is contaminated.

• The situation is so dire that the **United Nations had predicted** that Gaza would be **unlivable by 2020**.

• Gaza has been dubbed the **largest “open air prison”:**
  - It is one the most densely populated areas in the world
  - Israel has a **land, air, and sea blockade** on Gaza
  - Israel controls everything that goes in and out of Gaza
## Putting Things in Perspective...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaza</th>
<th>Metro Vancouver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Total 365 km² (141 sq mi)</td>
<td>• Total 2,882.68 km² (1,113.01 sq mi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population</strong></td>
<td><strong>Elevation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 2020 estimate 2,047,969[2]</td>
<td>60 m (200 ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Density 5,046/km² (13,069.1/sq mi)</td>
<td>Population (2016)[2][note 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Total 2,463,431</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Density 854.6/km² (2,213/sq mi)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Canadian CD</strong> rank: 2nd</td>
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</tbody>
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Gaza: The World’s Largest Open Air Prison

- 65km long and six metres high
- It is above and below ground and has an array of radar systems with cameras that cover the entire territory of the Gaza Strip – wide scale surveillance of a people who are effectively trapped behind an iron wall and a 14 year long blockade of air, sea, and land.

“The wall left a huge psychological impact on the people of Gaza, especially on the youth,” says Ruwaida Amir, teacher and journalist. “Now it really feels like we are in a prison with this steel wall surrounding us.”

https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-iron-wall-gaza-palestinians-siege

The aim is to kill our hope in life and isolate us from the world and the West Bank
- Ruwaida Amir, teacher and journalist
Amnesty 2017/2018 and 2020 Annual Reports: Israel is Killing and Torturing Children With Impunity
Murders of Palestinian Children

In 2000, Faris Odeh was murdered. After throwing stones at Israeli tanks during the Second Intifada, Israeli forces shot him in the neck. He was 14 years old.
In 2001, Israeli snipers murdered 12-year-old Muhammad al-Durrah in the lap of his father, who was trying to shield him from bullets.

His death was on film by a Palestinian cameraman.
Mohammed Tamimi: 15-Year-Old Shot in the Face by Israeli Soldiers

Mohammed Tamimi, who was shot in face by Israeli forces, was unable to remember anything after waking up from four-day coma (MEE/Tessa Fox)
On the 28th of July, 2021, Israeli soldiers killed 11 year old Muhammad Abu Sara by shooting 11 times at the car he was in for no legitimate reason.
On the 24th of August 2021, Israel killed 15 year old Imad Khaled Saleh Hashash in a refugee camp by shooting him in the head.
On the 5th of November 2021, Israeli forces killed 13-Year-old Mohammad Da’das by shooting him in the stomach.
Despite the fact that there’s been rising media attention to the atrocities being committed by Israel, this doesn’t stop it from killing children with impunity - this is why divestment is important - we need to make it infeasible for Israel to continue committing these atrocities.

“2021 Becomes Deadliest Year for Palestinian Children Since 2014”
Israeli High Court greenlights holding Palestinian bodies as bargaining chips

According to B'Tselem figures, Israel is currently holding the bodies of at least 52 Palestinians who carried out attacks against Israelis, or whom the military claims attempted such attacks since September 2015, and is refusing to return them to their families. This causes immense suffering to the families, as they are unable to bury their loved ones and perform the mourning rituals.

Holding the bodies of Palestinians as bargaining chips for future negotiations is a long-standing practice in Israel, but the policy has always been vague. At times, it seemed as though decisions were made in every case separately and on an ad-hoc basis in response to pressure put on the establishment and according to political considerations. At other times, Israel generally refused to return the bodies of Palestinians, and there were also times when Israel did return them. When the wave of attacks began in October 2015, Israel resumed its practice of holding onto the bodies of Palestinians who had perpetrated attacks or had been deemed a security risk.
Israel is currently destroying Yusufiya Cemetery, a Muslim cemetery near the Old City of Jerusalem, to build a national park in its place.
The dehumanization of Palestinians

- Israeli Deputy Defence Minister Ze’ev Boim - questioned whether Palestinians have a “genetic defect”

- Likud Member Yehiel Hazan - described Palestinians as “worms underneath this earth” and claimed that Israel is dealing with “a nation of murderous terrorists” (qtd. in Ghanim 73).

- A former Chief of Staff, Moshe Ya’alon - told Haaretz newspaper that the Palestinian "threat" is like “cancer”, on which he is performing “chemotherapy” (qtd. in Shavit).
The United Nations defines apartheid as a system that involves institutionalized acts "committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them".

Apartheid Involves Subjecting Members of a Racial Group(s) to:

- **Murder**
- Infringement on their freedom through subjugation to **torture** and **cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment** or punishment
- **Arbitrary arrest and illegal imprisonment**
- Imposing **living conditions** calculated to cause **physical destruction** in whole or in part
- **Legislative measures** and other measures calculated to prevent a racial group from participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country and the creation of conditions preventing the full development of such a group or groups, including denying them the **right to leave and to return to their country**, the **right to freedom of movement and residence**, the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

Apartheid Involves Subjecting Members of a Racial Group(s) to:

1. Measures designed to divide the population along racial lines by the creation of separate reserves and ghettos for the members of a racial group or group

2. Exploitation of the labour of the members of a racial group or groups, in particular by submitting them to forced labour;

3. Persecution of organizations and persons, by depriving them of fundamental rights and freedoms, because they oppose apartheid
A System of Apartheid

Human Rights Watch (HRW) and B'tselem, an Israeli Human Rights Organization, have both acknowledged that Israel is committing crimes of apartheid.
1. In the Human Rights Watch Report Titled, “A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution”, Israel’s system of control and discrimination against the Palestinians has been considered to constitute crimes against humanity, specifically those of apartheid and persecution.

2. The report finds that the injustices committed against Palestinians fall under the crimes of apartheid and persecution as Palestinians face institutional discrimination because of their identity as Palestinians; under Israeli law, Jews and Palestinians belong to different “nationalities.’
Amnesty International’s New Report: It’s Apartheid

Israel’s apartheid against Palestinians: a cruel system of domination and a crime against humanity

Israeli authorities must be held accountable for committing the crime of apartheid against Palestinians, Amnesty International said today in a damming new report. The investigation details how Israel enforces a system of oppression and domination against the Palestinian people wherever it has control over their rights. This includes Palestinians living in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), as well as displaced refugees in other countries.

The comprehensive report, *Israel’s Apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime against Humanity*, sets out how massive seizures of Palestinian land and property, unlawful killings, forcible transfer, drastic movement restrictions, and the denial of nationality and
Entrenching Apartheid: The Nation State Law

- Passed by Netanyahu’s government in 2019
- It establishes Israel as the nation-state and historic homeland of the Jewish people only, who have “unique” rights to self-determination, entrenching inequality
- The law makes no mention of Palestinians, despite the fact that they are Indigenous to the land. Hence, it effectively erases the Palestinian people’s ties to their own land.
- Zwelivelile Mandela, Nelson Mandela’s grandson, remarks that “Apartheid Israel perpetuates statutory discrimination through the very definition by the law as a Jewish state; by doing so it renders non-Jews as second-class citizens, alternately as foreigners in the land of their birth.”
- The equivalent of this would be if Canada passed a law declaring itself the nation-state of one group only
Israel Privileges Jewish Settlers Over Palestinians

The Nation-State Law’s requirement that Israel exist as an exclusively Jewish state relies on laws and provisions that privilege Jewish settlers over Palestinians. For instance...

- **Any Jewish person** in the world has the power to travel to Israel and be **granted** Israeli citizenship

Meanwhile...

- Israel has **banned Palestinian refugees** who were expelled in 1948 the **right to return to their homeland**, even though this is a **legally enshrined right under international law**. Doing so would tip the demographic balance away from a Jewish majority state.
Racism in Israel: The “Demographic” Threat

- Israeli leaders regularly refer to Palestinians as “demographic threats” that need to be contained.

- For instance, in 2002 Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu celebrated the “dramatic drop in the birth rate within the ‘non-Jewish public’”. This racist terminology portrays the mere existence of Palestinians as a threat.

- Israel’s concern with the so-called demographic “threat” is a crucial part of its operations as a settler-colonial state: Israel seeks to ensure that its population is larger than the Palestinian population.
Dispelling Common Misconceptions

1. This is not “two-sided,” nor is it a “conflict.”
   - It is an issue of settler-colonialism and apartheid.
   - It is important to note the power-dynamics involved.

_{Israel_} uses sophisticated attack jets and naval vessels to bomb densely-crowded refugee camps, schools, apartment blocks, mosques and slums to attack a population that has no air force, no air defense, no navy, no heavy weapons, no artillery units, no mechanized armor, no command in control, no army and calls it a war.

**IT IS NOT WAR, IT IS MURDER.**

- Noam Chomsky
1. Whereas the United Nations Security Council resolution 2334 has declared that Israeli settlements in the Palestinian Territories are a “flagrant violation of international law” and that they violate Palestinian human rights.

2. Whereas the United Nations has produced a database of companies which are wrongly contributing to the development of these illegal settlements.

3. And whereas this UN database includes six companies, shares of which are held by the University of British Columbia: Motorola Solutions Inc, General Mills Inc, Partner Communications Ltd, Bezeq the Israeli Telecommunications Corporation, Cellcom Israel Ltd, and Bank Hapoalim BM.

1. Whereas UBC also hold shares in three other companies that violate Palestinian human rights: Caterpillar, Hewlitt Packard and Lockheed Martin.

2. And whereas UBC has a responsible investment policy and has signed onto the United Nations responsible investment program.

3. Therefore be resolved that the AMS will urge the UBC and the board of governors to direct the UBC Endowment Fund to divest from the nine companies mentioned above.

1. Be it further resolved that the AMS will release a statement condemning the Israeli state’s system of apartheid and its occupation of Palestine.
UBC’s Investments in Each Company

1. HP – 0.01%
2. Caterpillar – 0.02%
3. Lockheed Martin – 0.02%
4. Motorola Solutions Inc – 0.01%
5. General Mills Inc – 0.02%
6. Partner Communications Ltd – 0.01%
7. Bezeq the Israeli Telecommunications Corporation – 0.01%
8. Cellcom Israel Ltd – 0.01%
9. Bank Hapoalim BM – 0.01%
Statement Of Solidarity

We, the undersigned, assert our support for Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) and Social Justice Centre (SJC)’s motion to divest from Israeli companies that violate the human rights of Palestinians by operating in illegal settlements and/or providing Israel with weapons, equipment, or technology used to violate Palestinian human rights.

In 2020, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released a database of companies involved in the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements throughout occupied Palestine and the occupied Syrian Golan (A/HRC/43/71). Illegal settlements are constructed on Palestinian territories through the forced displacement and dispossession of Indigenous Palestinian people. Building and maintaining the settlements is only made possible through human rights violations. UBC’s June 2020 Disclosure of Endowment Public Equity Holdings reveals our institution’s direct engagement with six of the companies on this database: Motorola Solutions Inc, General Mills Inc, Partner Communications Ltd, Bezeq the Israeli Telecommunications Corporation, Cellcom Israel Ltd, and Bank Hapoalim BM.

In addition, UBC has equity holdings in three companies that have been cited for their role in contributing to the oppression of Palestinians: Caterpillar makes bulldozers that have been used to demolish Palestinian homes and villages; Lockheed Martin manufactures weapons of war, including F-16 fighter jets that have been used by the Israeli military for over a decade in campaigns and bombings against Palestinians, many with civilian casualties; and HP provides technologies of surveillance and control used by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory.

We, therefore, contend that not only are these companies’ actions incompatible with UBC’s Responsible Investment Policy, but they are also incompatible with UBC’s commitment to truth and reconciliation, as well as to the policies and principles of the United Nations and its agencies.
Signed Clubs

These are only a portion of all the groups that make up this coalition
The Companies
Lockheed Martin

- LM have built multiple iterations of Israeli Defence Force aircraft, including a $2.7 billion dollar deal to build 50 new F-35 jets for Israel by 2022.
- Multiple other university campuses have divested from them for this very reason.
- There is a “revolving door” between their board and US defense officials.
- LM constructed F-16 fighter jets have been used by the Israeli military for over a decade in campaigns and bombings, many with civilian casualties.

Source: https://investigate.afsc.org/company/lockheed-martin
One of Israel’s largest banks, they finance the construction projects in the illegal settlements
They have multiple branches in the settlements in the West Bank and Golan Heights
Financed the light rail system that connects the settlements around Jerusalem to the city centre
The bank also directly loans for mortgages on the homes it helps build in the settlements
Bezeq the Israeli Telecommunication Corp LTD

- The largest telecommunications company in Israel.
- Provides telecommunication, cell phone, and satellite broadcasting to all of the Israeli settlements.
- Additionally provides services and infrastructure to the settlements, to the military bases, and to checkpoints.
- Has erected close to 200 antenna on settlement lands.
Pillsbury is a food products manufacturer that is owned by General Mills.

Pillsbury manufactures goods in a factory in the Atarot Industrial Zone, an illegal settlement that Israel occupied during the 1967 war and then illegally annexed.

UN categorizes General Mills as a company that exploits “natural resources [in occupied territory], in particular water and land, for business purposes, in violation of international law.

By operating its Pillsbury factory in an illegal Israeli settlement, not only is General Mills complicit in Israel’s occupation and annexation of the West Bank, it is also profiting from apartheid.

- Cheap land and cheap labor
- Lax regulations and environmental protection standards
Caterpillar

- Caterpillar is the world’s largest manufacturer of construction and mining equipment.
- The commander of the Israeli army qualified Caterpillar equipment as “key weapons” in maintaining the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- From September 2000 to March 2006, WHO had already documented the uprooting of more than 1,389,190 olive, date, plum, lemon and orange trees, causing significant environmental and economic impacts for hundreds of Palestinians.
- Since 1967, CAT bulldozers have destroyed more than 12,000 homes and businesses in the Gaza Strip, West Bank and East Jerusalem, causing more than 50,000 Palestinians to become homeless.
- The equipment has also been used to construct the security wall and this was deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice.
1. These acts are justified as punishment against the family homes of Palestinians involved or suspected of being involved in military activities against Israel.
   
a. A report by B’Tselem (The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories) shows that 47% of houses destroyed were not the homes of Palestinians suspected of involvement in military activities.

1. The acts committed with the Caterpillar bulldozers are illegal under Article 52 of the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions.

b. This article requires special protection to civilian property by stating that “the attack must be limited strictly to military objectives” and that “in case of doubt whether an object which is normally dedicated to civilian purposes, such as [...] a house [...], is being used to make an effective contribution to military action, it shall be presumed not to be so.
Hewlett-Packard Company

1. Hewlett-Packard provide and operate technology that Israel uses to maintain its system of apartheid, occupation and settler colonialism over the Palestinian people.
   a. Israel’s Population Registry – Aviv system
   b. Israeli Biometric documentation
   c. Services to Israel Prison Service
   d. Services to Israel Police
2. Israel’s Population Registry – Aviv system
   a. Basis of Israel’s ID card system that determines how much of Palestine one is allowed to access.
   b. Israeli Jewish citizens are allowed to live in the whole country while Palestinian in the occupied West Bank and Gaza are restricted.
   ● HP’s role is similar to Polaroid’s complicity with South Africa during apartheid.
1. **Services to Israel Prison Service**

   a. HP provides services and equipment to the Israeli Prison Service (IPS), including providing and maintaining its central server system.

   b. Israeli prisons hold 4,700 Palestinian political prisoners, including many children and the ill-treatment of children imprisoned by Israel is “widespread, systematic and institutionalized” according to UNICEF.

   c. According to Human Rights Watch “the extraction of confessions under duress, and the acceptance into evidence of such confessions by the military courts, form the backbone of Israel's military justice system.”
“Businesses play a central role in furthering the establishment, maintenance and expansion of Israeli settlements. They are involved in constructing and financing settlement homes and supporting infrastructure, providing services to the settlements, and operating out of them. In doing so, they are contributing to Israel’s confiscation of land, facilitate the transfer of its population into the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and are involved in the exploitation of Palestine’s natural resources.”

From A/HRC/37/39.
Motorola Solutions sells surveillance equipment to Israel.
Their equipment has been installed in Israel’s illegal settlements in the separation walls and checkpoints in Gaza and the West Bank and Israeli military bases.
In 2014, Motorola signed a 15-year, $100 million contract with the Israeli Defense Ministry to develop an encrypted smartphone system for the Israel military and security forces.
The company has additional contracts with the Israeli Prison Service and the Population and Immigration Authority, which both play critical roles in Israel’s occupation apparatus. For example, they provided the communication systems for the Ofer Prison, which holds many Palestinian political prisoners.
Motorola Solutions Israel developed military technology components, including electronic fuses for aircraft bombs and guided munitions for the Israeli Air Force and other major Israeli defense industries.
Partner Communications LTD.

**What the company does:** Internet WiFi provider, mobile network operator, fixed telephony services, OTT/IPTV provider in the occupied West Bank.

**Why these actions are problematic and UBC should divest?**

- Listed in [UN report](#) of 112 countries aiding the Israeli settlement project under activity categories e and g-- located on occupied land and/or benefit commercially from the natural resources located in occupied territory.
- [Norwegian KLP (largest pension fund)](#) divested in 2021 from this company (among others) citing concerns of contributing to human rights abuses from the companies.
  - Specifically regarding Partner: their services are contributing to making “the settlements attractive residential areas.”
Why Are We Focusing on Illegal Settlements?

Israeli Settlements in occupied Palestine are a verified violation of the 4th Geneva Conventions according to the International Criminal Court and the Criminal Court of Justice. The law, which prohibits a country from transferring a population into occupied territory applies to the 700,000 settlers that have since been constructed on the ruins of Palestinian villages. These “Jewish Only” settlements are located in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and are connected by “Israeli Only” roads, checkpoints and fences. Beyond being supported by a racist, segregationist mentality, these settlements are often occupied by armed settlers that have repeatedly attacked surrounding Palestinians and their farmland. In an effort to ethnically cleanse Palestinians, Israel has attempted to expand these settlements by annexing Palestinian land illegally. Israeli Settlements are illegal under international law, and must be treated as such by the international community.
Why Is It Important for the AMS to Divest?

UBC is a global institution, with students from all over the world. The AMS represents those students in cooperation with the university, but also in defiance of it if need be.

- The nature of minority struggle is that advocating on behalf of minorities does not always directly benefit a majority.

- UBC is currently restructuring investments around fossil fuel divestment. This is the perfect time to ask for additional human rights screens like this motion.
Many countries commit human rights abuses, so why specifically “target” or single out Israel?

- **Holding Israel accountable for its crimes against Palestinians does not detract from the need to hold other countries accountable.**

- **Israel is not being “unfairly” targeted.** It is the only apartheid state.
Of all of the methods that could be used to pressure Israel to comply with international law, why divestment?

- In the latest bombings alone, at least 67 children have been killed in Gaza. Unfortunately, moral arguments alone do not appeal to the Israeli government.
- **Therefore, it is our job to make it infeasible for Israel to continue oppressing Palestinians.** Through economic pressure, we want to make “injustice a bad investment”. This is the same method South African anti-apartheid activists used.
The motion was adopted on January 27th 2021. Councilor Mathew Ho brought the motion on behalf of the UBC EHK Association and others who are concerned:

- “Student unions at McGill and McMaster have released statements.” Student unions at leading universities worldwide have also released statements.
- “UBC shares exchange links with universities in Hong Kong.” This is the same case with Israel.
- “The AMS has a history of taking stands: divestment from apartheid South Africa, divestment because of climate change, etc.”
- “This is about academic freedom, freedom of speech, and human rights: things we think the AMS stands for.”
- “Taking a stand is symbolic, but it will empower our VPAUA, and is important.”
There was similar concerns about the possibility of Chinese students on campus feeling alienated or antagonized by the motion, expressed by VP External Kalith Nanayakkara.

In response, the Student governor, Georgia Yee, expressed support for the motion and noted that the AMS is not "issuing a condemnation of Chinese students but of the Chinese government and its complicity in the deterioration of democracy" exactly the same case for our motion:

We are not condemning Israeli or Jewish students, many of whom are part of this coalition.

Kalith Nanayakkara:
- I expressed support earlier.
- I did have a student reach out to me during this meeting who expressed concern about Chinese students on campus: the possibility of them being antagonized or alienated.

Georgia Yee:
- I’d like to express my support for this motion.
- When it comes to issues like Mainland China and Hong Kong, one of the things to be mindful of is the need to make sure that we are not issuing a condemnation of Chinese students but of the Chinese government and its complicity in the deterioration of democracy.
- We are standing for peaceful protest, students using their voices, student activism.
- If we are making a media release, it would also be great to refer to the work we are doing to improve conditions related to democracy.
- The conversation needs to be nuanced as well.
The AMS’s Values When It Comes to Human Rights Issues

On March 1st, 2021, The AMS passed the following statement regarding the situation in Hong Kong:

- “The Alma Mater Society stands in solidarity with student activists in Hong Kong and condemns the deterioration of Hong Kong’s civil liberties and civil rights, including the suppression of activists as a result of the National Security Law imposed on Hong Kong.”

- “Around the world, student organizers and community members are joining together, to denounce authoritarianism. The AMS has always stood up for upholding democratic values and human rights as an organization, and stands behind those fighting for freedom, human rights, and democracy.”

- “We stand in solidarity with UBC students, of Hong Kong, Chinese, Uyghur, and Hui heritage and continue to advocate for human rights around the world.”
UBC STUDENTS DENOUNCE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

To our UBC Community,

The AMS is unsettled and appalled by Russia's unprovoked and unjust invasion of Ukraine. We strongly condemn the actions of the Russian military and call upon political leaders here in Canada, and around the world, to ensure Russia is held accountable. We join local, provincial, federal and international leaders in calling for an immediate withdrawal by Russia and a de-escalation of tensions in the region.

This troubling, chilling invasion may have a profound impact on many in our UBC student community. As a student of Ukrainian descent myself, I understand how difficult, saddening, and frightening the news of this invasion can be. If you or someone you know needs help or support, there is always someone to talk to. These resources are available to help no matter how much support you need:
In 1987, a referendum directing the AMS to divest from products made by Carling O’Keeffe and Rothmans, companies that were linked to supporting South African Apartheid, failed. The referendum failed as 1,951 out of 3,371 students voted against the divestment and the voter quorum was not reached.

Despite this, in 1989, the AMS Council voted on a motion to cease the sale of Rothman products in all AMS stores to pressure the South African government to put an end to its discriminatory actions.

The AMS stood against apartheid once, the AMS should do it again.
June 10, 2021

TW: State-Sanctioned Violence, Death

RE: Solidarity with Palestinian Uprising, General Strike, and Commitment to BDS The Simon Fraser Student Society advocates for, and stands in solidarity with, the

Palestinian people in condemnation of the Israeli State’s settler-colonial advancement, human rights violations, and war crimes against Palestinians. We denounce the ongoing attacks on Palestinians by the Israeli forces and the continuing escalation of violence against Palestinians following decades of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing by the State of Israel. The SFSS wholeheartedly deplores the repeated, unwarranted, and excessive use of force against Palestinian protestors in East Jerusalem
University of Toronto Student Union adopts BDS motion

"Be it resolved that The UTSU wholly divest funds & further on forbid investment to firms complicit in the occupation of Palestinian Territory," read the motion.

By MICHAEL STARR  Published: FEBRUARY 17, 2022 23:14
Updated: FEBRUARY 17, 2022 23:16
Other academic institutions around the world have already divested on legal, intellectual, and moral grounds, including the University of Leeds in 2018 and the University of Manchester in 2020, while many student unions have passed divestment resolutions, including at the University of California Berkeley in 2013, Columbia University in 2020, and San Francisco State University in 2020.
- UBC’s legal opinion on fossil fuel divestment stated that UBC can and must divest if it is financially prudent to do so, or if the financial impact is negligible. 0.12% of UBC’s holdings are held in these companies. The purpose is not to hurt the university’s finances or the companies. The point is to remove financial license.

- The **financial risk** associated with oppression and human rights violations, is very well established.

- It is the **perfect time to ask UBC to add other screens**, such as screening out companies involved in the occupation.
Fiscal Precedent: Divestment from Fossil Fuels

- 2% of the portfolio (at time of divestment commitment)
- Climate change considered a significant “ESG” (Environmental, Social, Governance) risk
  - Risk of stranded assets = financial risk
  - “UBC and IMANT believe that ESG considerations have the potential to impact investment risks and returns. We actively seek to identify ESG threats and invest in opportunities driven by explicit and thoughtful considerations of environmental, social and governance matters.”
- Success required persistent student advocacy including support of the AMS
Fiscal Precedent: Divestment from Russia

UByssey article, March 11, 2022: UBC’s endowment invested in Russian majority state-owned bank, oil companies

- UBC fund managers rapidly started divesting from Russian stocks in response to Feb 24th invasion
- The current estimated weight in Russian companies is “around 0.12 per cent.”
Referendum:

Representative government can be taken as a deflection of responsibility or as a mandate to take action.

Low participation in referendums tells us that the UBC student body views its AMS the second way. They pay executives and elect councillors for the express purpose to make these hard, vital, time-sensitive, important decisions.

What about a referendum?
Is it unrealistic to get UBC to divest?

Has any comparable institution divested?
● Yes, major institutional investors have divested.
  ○ Presbyterian Church USA and the United Methodist Church (UMC)
  ○ The Dutch pension fund PGGM and the Norwegian, Luxembourg and New Zealand governments have divested from companies over their role in Israeli violations of international law.
  ○ Major European private banks including Nordea and Danske Bank.
  ○ George Soros and Bill Gates have also divested from BDS targets.
Conclusion.....

Can we count on your support?

THANK YOU!
Resources:

Some book recommendations:

- The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine by Ilan Pappe - Ilan Pappe is a Jewish-Israeli historian.

- The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance by Rashid Khalidi

- A Colonial Present by Derek Gregory (divided into sections on Iraq, Afghanistan, and Palestine

- Justice for Some by Noura Erakat

- Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine and the Foundations of a Movement by Angela Davis

Instagram:
- IMEU
- Eye on Palestine
- Jewish voices for peace
- Independent Jewish voices
- Palestine Feminist Collective
- Mohammed El Kurd
- Muna El Kurd