



BOYCOTT THE FILM AGREEMENT

In 2005, Palestinian civil society issued a call for a campaign of 'Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions' (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law with regard to Palestinian rights. This includes the rights of refugees in exile, Palestinians under occupation in the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem, as well as the Palestinian citizens of the Israeli state.

We are concerned that the 'Agreement on Film Co-Production Between the Government of New Zealand and the Government of the State of Israel', signed in March 2016, makes our country complicit in Israel's systemic racism and military occupation. Israel relies heavily on exporting its cultural brand to maintain its legitimacy in the eyes of the world. Although this facade of a tolerant and progressive culture is starting to crumble, by signing this agreement, New Zealand is complicit in Israel's attempts to whitewash over half a century of blatant, relentless, daily subjugation of the Palestinian people.

We oppose the film co-production agreement and call for the New Zealand government to revoke the agreement based on the principles of BDS, until Israel complies with international law on human rights, return of Palestinian refugees and withdrawal from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Increasingly in the last few years and especially the last few months, governments, international organisations, labour organisations, universities, academics, faith groups – including many Jewish groups and individuals, artists and other cultural figures have responded to the Palestinians' call for BDS.

New Zealand has a proud history of standing up to racism and discrimination internationally. For instance, our protests against the South African Apartheid-era Springbok tour in 1981 were a defining moment in the anti-apartheid movement.

We want New Zealand to stand on the right side of history once again.

www.boycottfilmagreement.nz

Letter of endorsement from British film director Ken Loach

"Your campaign against the proposed film co-production agreement between New Zealand and Israel has my whole-hearted support. Israel's long record of oppressing the Palestinians is well known.

Israel continues to steal land from Palestinians, destroys their houses, imprisons their children and makes their daily life intolerable. Israel ignores U.N Resolutions and is in breach of the Geneva Conventions.

In recent years there is overwhelming evidence of war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza: the wanton killing of civilians, the deliberate targeting of schools and hospitals, destruction of houses and collective punishments. All this happens with the open support of Israel's powerful allies in the west. What is civil society to do?

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanction movement began in 2005 as a call from Palestinian civil society to stand with them against Israeli oppression. They ask that there is no collusion with any project that includes state funding by the Israeli Government. This does not apply to individuals who refuse state sponsorship or who do not otherwise identify with Israel's actions. This forces us all to choose. Do we stand with the oppressor or the oppressed? There is no middle position.

Please uphold the rights of the Palestinians and oppose this deal."