

BRICUP Newsletter 121

BRICUP

British Committee for the
Universities of Palestine

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“Entangled: graphene, arms, Israel and the University of Manchester”

Greg Dropkin. Liverpool friends of Palestine

An Al Jazeera headline on 26 April read “Anger as UK university research ends up with Israeli arms company – graphene composite developed by University of Manchester is being tested by an Israeli drone manufacturer”. Their [report](#) quoted UoM student Huda Ammori:

“In all of the universities branding around graphene research they talk about the great benefits it can have in providing clean drinking water for millions of people, but the issue is there's clearly a massive focus on the arms trade.

“As a Palestinian student, I feel embarrassed that my student fees are going towards components that end up in the hands of the Israeli military, which openly admits to testing their weapons on Palestinians.”

Last October, the UK company Versarien plc signed a collaboration agreement with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), the state-owned military industry and largest supplier of drones attacking Gaza in 2014. Versarien Chief Exec Neil Ricketts’ enthusiasm for the IAI deal was unbounded.

“This is massive news for us as a company and for the industry in general. They've got 16,000 employees and they turnover 4 billion dollars. They're involved in everything from space vehicles to passenger jets. They have a huge defence sector to their business as well. 77% of their business is actually export, so although they're based in Israel, these products end up all over the world.”

IAI will apply Nanene to develop composite materials, used to strengthen and lighten aerospace designs. Back in 2017, Ricketts described Nanene as “our baby product, coming out of the University of Manchester campus”.

Nanene is a patented technology for industrial production of graphene, the nanomaterial isolated and studied by Nobel prize winning physicists Andrei Geim and Konstantin Novoselov at the UoM. Versarien holds 85% of the shares in 2-D Tech, the graphene company set up by the UoM, and the university holds extensive shares in Versarien while retaining a 15% holding in 2-D Tech.

Last November we were looking at the anodyne response the University eventually provided to Huda's Freedom of Information request for details of collaborations with Israeli universities, after 6 months delay and intervention by the Information Commissioner. One answer referred to an unspecified research project with the Weizmann Institute, with an unspecified funder, priced in US\$. Meanwhile, the Weizmann Institute website mentioned a joint project with Prof Andre Geim, with no details.

This prompted the question, how are the UoM, graphene, Israel and the arms/security trade connected? The Versarien-IAI deal emerged, involving all four components. Other projects involve the UoM in graphene research with arms firms and Israeli universities. Apart from graphene, the University works with Israel on

arms/security, and has its own projects with arms firms.

At least ten firms engaged in military production are involved with the National Graphene Institute and/or the Graphene Engineering and Innovation Centre at UoM. Many of them have arms deals with Israel. Apart from graphene, the University has collaborated in an EU funded project with the Ministry of Public Security, responsible for the Border Police who operate at the Apartheid Wall, oversee house demolitions, repress nonviolent Palestinian demonstrators, arrest and abuse children. Meanwhile, the UoM took part in the GAMMA project with BAE Systems to manage autonomous systems (e.g. drones). GAMMA included simulation of wide-area surveillance sensors, as used in hunter-killer drones for targeted assassination.

The details are set out in “[Entangled: Graphene, Arms, Israel and the University of Manchester](#)”.

As with the report on the University of Liverpool (“[Get Your Bombs Off Our Lawn](#)”), “Entangled” uses public sources: the CORDIS database of EU funded projects, the UoM and Israeli university websites, UK gov’t websites and twitter feeds, Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), research co-authorship data, trade press reports, Companies House and other financial data...

These resources are relevant to other universities, if there are people willing to do the work! But then what?

So What?

One starting point is to ask different questions:

- Is it in the best interests of students and staff that University research contracts are so heavily tilted towards the arms industry?
- How does the University cater for science and engineering students who do not wish to have any involvement with the military in general or with arming Israel in particular?
- Should the University be able to hide the implications of its own research or the involvement of its partners in human rights abuses and war crimes?
- Who decides which funding strands and collaborations are legitimate to pursue?
- Who benefits from those close links with the arms industry?
- What efforts have staff made to develop projects without military involvement, or to seek alternative funding using the same skills and academic and technical expertise?
- Does academic freedom include the freedom to

view and consider University finances?

In Manchester the [BDS group](#) and CAAT have agreed demands for a joint campaign:

- The University will refrain from any cooperation in military or security fields with Israeli academic, State or industrial organisations, while Israel continues to defy UN Security Council resolutions and international law including the 4th Geneva Conventions.
- The University will end investment, commercial and research collaboration with Versarien and its subsidiaries, in view of Versarien's contract with Israel Aerospace Industries, which draws directly on research at the University of Manchester.
- The University will adopt and implement policies of complete transparency over past, present and future research projects, so that their implications can be considered in full.
- The University will put no pressure on students to carry out research projects involving the arms industry, and will offer alternatives.
- The University will commit significant resources to exploring and developing alternative industrial strategies in conjunction with trade unions and relevant experts, to end the University's reliance on the arms industry and to develop socially useful production.

Over in Liverpool, the university's involvement in the arms trade was highlighted in a Teach-Out during the UCU pensions strike. An [earlier event](#) convened by Prof. David Whyte to commemorate the Liverpool physicist Joseph Rotblat – who walked out of the Manhattan Project to develop the atomic bomb – included Prof. Jonathan Rosenhead (LSE, BRICUP) and Riya Hassan (Palestinian BDS National Committee).

As the campaign develops in the North West, we hope that academic and non-academic staff and their unions will engage with the issues. If BRICUP can help similar campaigns develop at other universities, that would be great!

Notes

Al Jazeera report 26 April 2018:
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/04/anger-uk-university-research-ends-israeli-arms-company-180424060140157.html>

“Entangled: Graphene, Arms, Israel and the University of Manchester”:
<https://bdsuom.com/2018/04/29/manchester->

[university-used-as-a-research-hub-for-israels-arms-trade/](#)
<http://www.labournet.net/other/1804/entangled.pdf>

University of Manchester campaign sites:
<http://www.bdsuom.com>
<http://www.demilitariseeducation.com>

“Get Your Bombs Off Our Lawn: The arms industry and the University of Liverpool”:
<http://www.labournet.net/other/1510/livarmsall.pdf>

Video of the Joseph Rotblat commemoration:
<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/engage/events/2015-2016-programme/joseph-rotblat/>

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Beyond dual use: Israeli universities' role in the military-security-industrial complex

Les Levidow

“It 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”-Desmond Tutu, speaking in 2010 shortly before the University of Johannesburg cut ties with Ben Gurion University.

‘Dual use’ potential should lead us to question any claim that a technoscientific development has purely civilian relevance ([see previous item from the ECCP](#)). Commercial design frequently blurs any distinction between civilian and military uses. More fundamentally, political regimes blur that distinction as our societies become militarised. Through securitisation agendas, societal conflicts are turned into ‘security threats’ which variously warrant various instruments – threat assessments, mass surveillance, counter-insurgency and lethal force – treating civilians as if they were a military force at war.

A central role has been played by Israeli universities with funds from EU projects and research partners from our universities. Their support makes us complicit in war crimes, as this article will show.

Securitisation agenda linking the EU with Israel

The EU's research Framework Programmes generally have had their legal basis in the EC Treaty's Article 163 on R&D. By contrast, its 'Security Challenges' research programme was given a legal basis in Article 157 on the 'competitiveness of the Community's industry'. This Programme has conflated diverse problems such as migration, public disorder, organised crime and terrorism as security threats. This securitisation agenda eventually permeated the EU's broader research Framework Programmes.

It has been driven by and benefited Israeli partners of research projects for at least the past decade. From the standpoint of EU research chiefs, Israeli partners offer crucial expertise for enhancing the global competitiveness of European institutions. For Western elites more generally, the model is Israel's military-industrial complex, which has produced a world-leading security industry. As one of many examples, the RAND Corporation and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem participated an EU project (EUSECON) aiming to establish a research network to provide 'research-based policy advice on economic aspects of security' (Hayes, 2009).

The EU has funded weapons development by Israeli companies, while downplaying the military design. Israel Aerospace Industries has received EU funding via 29 projects. The EU's ambassador in Tel Aviv has congratulated Israeli partners in EU collaborative projects, such as Israel Aerospace Industries for 'developing the aircraft of the future'. This is a euphemism for the company manufacturing the [Heron](#) drone, which has been [used](#) in attacks on Gaza (Cronin, 2018).

Since the 1990s, the Zionist colonisation project has become 'Occupation Inc.', i.e. a private military-security-industrial complex which turns systemic violence into an export commodity (Hever, 2017). Israeli security forces have become increasingly dependent on high-tech devices from Israeli universities. New technologies help Israel to impose its Occupation with fewer soldiers, while also providing new export products for Israel's security industry (Right2Edu, 2014).

The Occupation has become a crucial laboratory for testing Israel's novel weapons. Its arsenal encompasses nanotechnology, hidden camera systems, information databases on civilian activity, automated targeting systems and unmanned drones. It offers 'combat proven' weaponry, i.e. tested on the Palestinian as dangerous 'Other'. This regime has become an

attractive model for states worldwide constructing putative 'enemies' which warrant repressive or even lethal responses (Halper, 2015).

Israeli universities facilitating and sanitising military uses

Israeli security forces have become increasingly dependent on high-tech devices from Israeli universities. New technologies help Israel to impose its Occupation with fewer soldiers, while also providing new export products for Israel's security industry. Collaboration with the arms industry has come from the Technion in Haifa, the Weizman Institute in Rehovot, the Hebrew University and Ben Gurion University and Tel Aviv University.

Many examples blur the civilian-military distinction. The Haifa Technion helped to develop the D9 remote-controlled bulldozer, widely deployed in the destruction of Palestinian homes. During 2008-2013 it had a research partnership with Elbit Systems Ltd., which provides electronic detection devices used in the Israeli Separation Wall in the West Bank, and has also supplied drones to the Israeli army for use in combat in the West Bank and Gaza (Right2Edu, 2014; see also Mullen and Dawson, 2015). Bar-Ilan University has participated in joint research with the army, specifically in developing artificial intelligence for unmanned combat vehicles (Keller, 2009). Graphene can enhance lithium batteries in drones for either military or civilian uses; graphene has been developed collaboratively by the University of Manchester with Israeli companies and universities (Ammori and Dropkin, 2018; see their article in this issue).

Technion University has become virtually the R&D wing of the Israeli military. It 2008 it opened a center for developing electro-optics in partnership with Elbit, one of the largest Israeli weapons companies (Keller, 2009).

Technion has manufactured technologies specifically to torment recalcitrant populations. The '[Scream](#)' is a 'non-lethal' acoustic system that 'creates sound levels that are unbearable to humans at distances up to 100 meters', according to Technion. This crowd-control weapon is mainly used to suppress peaceful demonstrations in the occupied Palestinian territories (Lee, 2017). It has been nick-named 'the Shofar', a horn blown on High Holy Days as a reminder to repent for the sins of the past year; apparently the Palestinians must repent for Israel's war crimes.

As Palestinian academic Lisa Taraki argues, the Israeli academy is structurally complicit in state violence against Palestinians. High-level appointments have gone to 'individuals known to have supervised and designed repressive measures and persistently committed violations of international humanitarian law against Palestinians in their other careers as military and intelligence functionaries' (Taraki, 2015). Such individuals are treated as prestigious rather than as morally abject.

Universities help to sanitise Israeli weaponry in other ways. For example, a Technion course teaches students how to brand and market Israel's defence industry to global audiences. 'Through academia, the arms industry can present itself as furthering technological and theoretical advancements, disconnected from any violent effects on the ground', argues Haifa's Coalition of Women for Peace (Lee, 2017).

In sum, all Israeli universities serve a securitisation agenda, blurring the civilian/military distinction. Likewise the country's military-security-industrial complex. It uses Palestine as a laboratory for exporting an entire model of terrorising, controlling, suppressing and/or murdering recalcitrant populations. If we use the term 'dual use' at all, then it should refer to the systematic role of Israeli universities.

Collaboration between EU and Israeli universities has provoked protest in many places. For example, the EU has been funding the Law Train project, aiming to develop interrogation techniques through collaboration between KU Leuven and Israeli police. This collaboration attracted [protest](#) by students and eventually by a community campaign, the [Plate-Forme Charleroi-Palestine](#), which has faced police harassment.

Ghent University professors have been demanding that the institution end its collaboration with Israeli research partners which have close ties with the Israeli army: 'This collaboration makes the university complicit in war crimes and crimes against humanity', they argued. The protest emphasised UGent collaboration with the Israel Institute of Technology and Israel Aerospace Industries because they work with Elbit Systems, which develops the Hermes drones used in the 2014 attacks on Gaza (Furniere, 2018).

Such examples highlight how Israel's military-security-industrial complex depends on its universities and research institutes. Any UK

university partnering with them becomes complicit in Israeli's war crimes. Academic staff and students have a responsibility to stop or prevent such collaboration.

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violence, in Mullen and Dawson (eds), *Against Apartheid: The Case for Boycotting Israeli Universities*. San Francisco: Haymarket Books.



Stop Law Train campaign, <https://stop-law-train.be/fr>

Good News for BDS as restrictions on academic freedom pushed back at LSE

John Chalcraft, 11 May 2018

A new Code of Practice on Free Speech was approved on Wednesday 2 May at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). The new Code has fewer restrictions on freedom of speech than the previous Code. This is good news for supporters of Palestinian rights and the BDS movement because the restrictions in the old Code had been used to put adverse pressure on events addressing Palestinian rights and freedoms.

The old Code allowed the LSE to replace event Chairs on the basis of their beliefs and views. The reasoning went that this was a ‘prudent’ measure which would protect the panel and School against charges of bias. Instead, the old Code confused freedom of belief with staff competence to Chair, cast a chill on the freedom of staff to express their views, and put obstacles in the way of students seeking to stage events challenging the conventional wisdom. Far from being prudent, it involved an admission by the School that its own staff were incompetent in discharging basic duties. This admission imprudently offered an open goal for complaints.

In practice, as far as anyone knows, the old Code was only used to replace Chairs in relation to events engaging with Palestinian rights and freedoms. This has happened at least three times since 2015. Pro-Israeli events have not had their Chairs replaced, nor have, to my knowledge, any other events. The implication is that those who lobby for the Israeli government in suppressing freedom of speech on campus have been busy.

The new Code is an improvement. It advances academic freedom by removing the link between staff competence to Chair events and their beliefs and views. The School can no longer replace the Chair of an Event on the basis of the Chair’s beliefs. The School has been persuaded by the core argument that the existing local regulations chill freedom of speech. It has changed the Code accordingly.

This strike against restriction is particularly important because the School was initially moving swiftly to add further restrictions to the Code in the wake of the BDS panel at LSE on 7 November 2017. Staff, amazingly, were going to be asked to declare ‘controversial’ views in advance of events. This police measure has been put to bed. The relaxation is also important in the generally restrictive climate of risk-assessment, reputational sensitivity, the Prevent Duty, and counterterrorism legislation.

LSE’s new Code has two other important features. First, it contains no reference to the subjective and problematic idea that ‘insulting speech’ can be construed as a breach of public order and thus illegal. Second, it does not have any presumption that unpopular, controversial or new ideas that challenge the received wisdom are ipso facto biased or partial and need to be ‘balanced’ by some device – such as panel diversity. These are important protections for critical thinking in the sector as a whole.

It is worth noting that the new Code at LSE is consistent with the new [Higher Education and Research Act 2017](#), which establishes, among other things, e.g. at s. 14 (7) that staff are free to ‘question and test received wisdom, and . . . to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges they may have at the provider’.

As all parties recognize, the protections were won at LSE as a result of the concerted action of 108 staff – beginning with a letter to the Director (20 February 2018) – and as a result of the dialogue with the School that followed. The solidarity and

support of BRICUP, a wider network of UK academics, UCU, and the advice of at least two QCs has also been an important part of the picture.

It is hoped that this victory for freedom of speech and Palestinian rights can embolden push back against undue restrictions in other universities and colleges. Events about BDS should never be singled out for undue opprobrium and restriction.

The next step is of course to test out the new Code in practice.

Free speech in universities?

Jonathan Rosenhead

Across the turn of the year the Joint Committee [of the two houses of Parliament] on Human Rights held an Inquiry into Freedom of Speech in Universities., Chaired by Harriet Harman, the Committee held a series of hearings with witnesses from across the HE sector and beyond. (One early session was dominated by witnesses close to the arch-libertarian magazine Spiked.) Mostly though the witnesses comprised more usual suspects: professors, student union officers, vice-chancellors and the like, plus a number of representatives of voluntary bodies with particular axes to grind. I was one of those latter – representing not BRICUP but Free Speech on Israel (FSOI). FSOI also put in two written submissions (the extra one resulting from my turn as a witness); and submissions also came in from 100 others – official and religious bodies, academics, lawyers and other individuals, plus organisations across the voluntary sector.

The enquiry was sparked by a complex of issues that had raised concern in different quarters - the effect of Prevent legislation and processes, the ‘no platforming’ and ‘safe spaces’ policies adopted by some student unions, and the Charity Commission’s heavy-handed investigation into student unions that have passed Boycott resolutions. More came to the surface during the inquiry.

The reason that this Inquiry has a special relevance to BRICUP is the intensified difficulties that are being experienced in speaking up on campus, or anywhere else for that matter, for Palestinian rights. The safe spaces theme has been adopted by some who claim that Jewish students feel unsafe on campus as a result of campaigns such as Israeli Apartheid Week. The Prevent

operation, supposedly intended to obstruct the transition from radical thought to violent jihadi action, has particularly targeted individuals expressing pro-Palestinian sympathies (or even just badges). And universities have devised various stratagems that in practice make it particularly difficult to organise meetings about Israel/Palestine (sorry, ‘controversial subjects’): more hoops to jump through, payment for extra security, advance vetting of speakers and the texts of their speeches, and more.

Submission by Free Speech on Israel

The Free Speech on Israel submission focussed on the militant deployment of charges of antisemitism against critics of Israel, and on the campaign to persuade public bodies to adopt the deeply flawed (and partially bogus) ‘IHRA definition’ of antisemitism. This has had a good deal of success with local authorities, but not as yet with universities. In particular it stressed the attempts by external groups supportive of Israel to have individual meetings or the entirety of Israeli Apartheid Week banned by universities.

The submission also raised the organised attempts to disrupt or even close down meetings on the Israel/Palestine issue. The size of these groups is growing. Their activities are reminiscent of the tactics used by fascists in the 1930’s, and indeed some of those taking part do have connections to far-right organisations.

The recommendations that FSOI made were

The Government should withdraw its adoption of the IHRA ‘definition’ of antisemitism, now shown to be inaccurately promoted

Public bodies should cease adopting any version of this ‘definition’ for local use

Universities UK to issue guidance to member universities emphasising their managements’ obligation to prioritise their obligations under UK law to protect freedom of speech and assembly

Universities UK to collect data on the organised disruption of campus events dealing with Israel/Palestine, and to propose appropriate strategies by which universities can preserve the freedom to discuss the issues raised by the Israel/Palestine situation.

The Joint Committee’s Report

These recommendations were made with the intention of getting the issues into the public domain, rather than in any great expectation that the C0mmitte would adopt them. And so it proved.

The [Report of the Inquiry](#) was published towards the end of March. It contains no reference to the specific problems encountered by groups supporting Palestinian rights (and no mention either of antisemitism or the IHRA 'definition' of it). Its concentration is on the student body, and issues such as 'no platforming' and 'safe spaces' that have been used to obstruct the expression of certain views on campus.

There are however some helpful observations and recommendations. It re-emphasises the statutory right to free speech, and that unless it is unlawful, speech should normally be allowed. The 'safe spaces' mantra has been used from time to time to argue that because Palestinian advocacy (including promotion of BDS) makes Jewish students feel there is a hostile environment, it should not be allowed. The Committee's strong rejection of this concept is therefore helpful.

Other recommendations are still more germane. One is a strong message that universities should not enmesh requests for external speaker meetings with undue bureaucracy or unreasonable conditions, such as a requirement to submit their speeches in advance. Any additional security thought necessary in view of the topic of the meeting should be provided by the university (not charged to the student society, which could make the meeting financially impossible).

What will the government do?

To date the Government's public response has been limited to a press release about a round-table discussion with official stakeholders held on May 3rd. It reports that the Universities Minister Sam Gyimah is concerned about the rise in cases of no-platforming and safe space policies. He urged universities to 'stamp out institutional hostility' to unfashionable views. He "offered to work with the sector" to create new guidance that will clarify the rules for both students and universities – which would be the first such government intervention since the universities' free speech duty was introduced in 1986.

Paradoxically a conservative government now seems to be preparing to establish a policy that should in principle make pro-Palestinian advocacy on campus easier (though the devil will be in the detail). Its stance on 'no platforming' seems to derive from the fact that this policy was originally a radical one, opposing for example the presence of fascist or racist speakers on campus. But opposing it in the way that the Government is now proposing to do could open up spaces for supporters of Palestine.

It should be said that there is still a considerable body of opinion among Palestine solidarity activists that strongly supports the 'no platforming' of representatives of the Israeli state, as part of the PACBI call for academic boycott. The majority but not universal view within BRICUP for some time has been that this is a counter-productive policy. Where BRICUP speakers have countered Israeli diplomats in campus debates, the outcome has invariably been both a massive majority, and the before and after vote counts have shown a strong swing in favour of boycott.

Displaying pro-Palestine posters in universities: some legal advice

A BRICUP member recently received a request for advice from a member of staff from a neighbouring university, having been instructed by the university's Facilities Management to remove posters commemorating the Nakba, that s/he had distributed around the campus. On asking why, s/he was told that nobody is allowed to post anything political unless more than one side is represented. We hope to be able to report on how this particular issue develops in the next issue of the Newsletter. In the meantime, one of the legal members of BRICUP was able to provide the following advice.

The relevant law in the UK is Article 10 (1) of the European Convention on Human Rights ("Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority ..."), which is enforceable in the UK under s. 6(1) of the Human Rights Act 1998: "It is unlawful for a public authority to act in a way which is incompatible with a Convention right."

Handyside v. United Kingdom, European Court of Human Rights, 7 December 1976

49. ..Subject to paragraph 2 of Article 10 (art. 10-2) [legislation prohibiting incitement to racial or religious hatred, which is seen as a justifiable limit on freedom of expression], [freedom of expression] is applicable not only to "information" or "ideas" that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive or as a matter

of indifference, but also to those that **offend, shock or disturb the State or any sector of the population**. Such are the demands of that pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness without which there is no "democratic society". ...

People who are offended by the posters are free to put up their own posters. Posters, books and conferences do not have to be “neutral” or “balanced”.

Update on the medical campaign about medical complicity with torture in Israel

Derek Summerfield and Chris Burn- Cox

Our campaign has been running in various phases since 2009- at times seeking to draw in the World Medical Association (as here), at other times addressing the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture. Our letter recently published in the British Medical Journal- [Clinical care and complicity with torture: Israel](#)- conveys a succinct update on the state of things. In particular note what I report of ex-WMA President Sir Michael Marmot's statements at a public meeting last 11 December, a continuation of the line he took while WMA president to protect the Israeli Medical Association from the implications of the evidence in the public realm. Transparently partisan and unethical. Israel has always been able to count on well-placed 'friends' like this abroad, not least in the medical profession, who are happy to do propaganda work for a foreign power since that power is Israel and Israel is 'special'. Michael Marmot has been allowed to get away so far without having to give an account of himself, and we regard the case as still open. The campaign continues.

Recent reports on Gaza in the medical press.

[The Maiming Fields of Gaza](#)- Derek Summerfield, David Halpin, Swee Ang et al

[The Palestinian Day of Return: from a short day of commemoration to a long day of mourning](#) - Khamis Elessi Khamis, Research &

Evidence-Based Medicine Unit, Faculty of Medicine, Islamic University, Gaza City.

Both these reports highlight the systematic use of excessive force by the Israeli army towards unarmed civilians, children and journalists , including the use of snipers firing military grade ammunition which have caused crippling wounds to unarmed demonstrators. They also describe the catastrophic effects of the 12 year long Israeli blockade of Gaza on the care and health of her people, and the degradation of its health services.

Israeli army’s siege of a Palestinian university

Cynthia Franklin – Professor of English at the University of Hawai'i.

This is a [powerful first hand account](#) of the author’s experiences during her two week residency in the English Department at Al Quds University in occupied East Jerusalem. The campus is regularly attacked and invaded by the Israeli army who use tear gas and live bullets to terrorize staff and students.

Winner of the Dan David Prize to donate her prize money to Israeli anti-occupation organizations.

From an [article](#) by Amira Hass in Haaretz

One of the winners of this year’s [Dan David Prize](#) plans to give the prize money to three Israeli human rights organizations. Prof. Evelyn Fox Keller, one of nine people who received the award at Tel Aviv University on Sunday night, will give the money to [B’Tselem](#), the [Association for Civil Rights in Israel](#) and [Physicians for Human Rights Israel](#). The 82 year old scientist and feminist thinker, a former teacher at MIT, wrote, “*I am deeply grateful to the Dan David Foundation both for the honor conferred by the prize, and for the opportunity it provides me to support those elements of Israeli society committed to peaceful coexistence and to the protection of human rights for all.*”

Asked why she didn’t just refuse the prize, since it is granted by an Israeli university which is part of the system and doesn’t criticize it, she replied,

“I didn’t see it that way. I am accepting the prize in support of people who resist the system. I didn’t see what would be served by turning it down”. The \$3 million purse will be evenly divided among the nine winners.

The prize, named for the international entrepreneur and philanthropist who established it, is granted annually *“for achievements having an outstanding scientific, technological, cultural or social impact on our world,”*. According to its website. Prof. Fox Keller won for *“pioneering work on language, gender, and science”* which *“has been hugely influential on shaping our views of the history of science.”* Her research specialties are theoretical physics, mathematical biology, feminist thought and history of science.

Asked whether she thought Israeli universities should speak out against infringements on Palestinians’ academic freedom, Professor Fox Keller responded, *“Of course I think they should, but they don’t. And they don’t want to and don’t have a voice.”*

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BDS NEWS

Columbia University Community mounts protest against the Israeli Columbia Global Center

<https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/columbia-community-objects-to-israeli-global-center.html>

This petition (see text below) has been mounted by the Columbia academic community in protest at the refusal of the state of Israel to permit entry to Professor Katherine Franke of Columbia University. Professor Franke travelled to Israel to meet with Israeli and Palestinian colleagues. Professor Franke was interrogated for 14 hours before being sent back to NY and told she was barred from entry. The Community also adamantly opposes the creation of a Columbia Global Center in Israel.

We, the undersigned members of the Columbia community are outraged at the actions of the Israeli government to detain, interrogate, and deny a member of the Columbia faculty entry to the state of Israel, and by implication to Palestine. This is particularly objectionable when these actions are taken on account of a faculty member’s academic and political work that seeks to hold Israel – and other states – accountable to international human rights laws and norms.

We are shocked and disappointed that Columbia’s President and Provost have not issued strong statements articulating a commitment to the fundamental values of academic freedom and defending our faculty’s right to interrogate uncomfortable, inconvenient, or controversial matters of public concern, both in the U.S. and abroad.

Finally, we adamantly oppose the creation of a Columbia Global Center in Israel, particularly, though not only, because many members of the Columbia community would be denied entry to Israel because of their speech, or their academic and political work. This denial is in violation of Columbia’s core values, and Columbia must similarly deny to support, through association, such actions.

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Barnard College votes for BDS by a nearly 2-1 margin

Students at Barnard College, the elite women’s school in New York City, voted this week to ask the university administration to divest from eight companies that do business in Israel.

The referendum, which was written by students from Jewish Voice for Peace and Students for Justice in Palestine, listed ways that companies like Hyundai, Boeing and the Israeli national water carrier Mekorot allegedly violate international law, before asking whether the student government should encourage Barnard to divest from companies that “profit from or engage in the State of Israel’s treatment of Palestinians.”

To read more, go to <https://forward.com/fast-forward/399159/one-of-the-most-jewish-colleges-in-the-country-just-voted-for-bds-by/>

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500 Latin American Artists Support Cultural Boycott of Israel

<https://newslick.in/500-latin-american-artists-support-cultural-boycott-israel>

On April 14, a letter signed by [500 Latin American Artists](#) was launched by PACBI, the Palestinian-led campaign for the boycott of Israel. The artists pledge in the letter to not perform or exhibit in Israel or to receive Israeli funding until

it meets its obligations to respect Palestinian human rights. The poets, painters, rappers, theater directors, filmmakers, actors, writers, and musicians who said No to Israel's human rights violations, come from 17 different Latin American countries.

Some of the well-known artists endorsing this call for the cultural boycott are Chilean writer Lina Meruane, Colombian photographer Jesús Abad Colorado, Argentine rapper Daniel Devita, Colombian band Doctor Krápula, Chilean writer Carlos Labbé, Brazilian cartoonist Carlos Latuff, Colombian actor Álvaro Rodríguez, and Colombian theater director Patricia Ariza.

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News from other Campaigns

Belgian Campaign for the Academic Boycott of Israel (BACBI)

See their monthly newsletter no 35 for May 2018

https://www.bacbi.be/htm/Acad_NL35.htm , This includes news of the **honorary doctorate** awarded by the Free university of Brussels to the film Director and pro Palestinian activist, **Ken Loach**.

US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel

<http://www.usacbi.org/>

News from the **Association of Academics for the Respect of International Law in Palestine** (AURDIP)

<http://www.aurdip.fr/?lang=en>

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Sign the Commitment by UK Scholars to Human Rights in Palestine

This commitment, which has been signed by over 700 academics across UK's higher education system, is not to accept invitations for academic visits to Israel, not to act as referees in activities related to Israel academic institutions, or cooperate in any other way with Israeli universities.

It is a response to the appeal for such action by Palestinian academics and civil society due to the deep complicity of Israeli academic institutions in Israeli violations of international law. Signatories

have pledged to continue their commitment until Israel complies with international law, and respects Palestinian human rights.

For more information, and to sign, go to <http://www.commitment4p.com>

Notices

Speakers: We are always willing to help provide speakers for meetings. All such requests and any comments or suggestions concerning this Newsletter are welcome.

Email them to: newsletter@bricup.org.uk

Register as a supporter of BRICUP

You can register as a supporter of BRICUP and of the academic and cultural boycott of Israel [by completing this form](#).

We recognise that many individuals may wish to support our aims by private actions without wishing to be publicly identified. Supporters receive our regular newsletter by email and receive occasional emails giving details of urgent developments and of ways to support our activities. We do not disclose the names of our supporters to anyone outside BRICUP or share them with any other organisation.

Financial support for BRICUP

We welcome one-off donations, but we can plan our work much better if people pledge regular payments by standing order.

You can [download a standing order form](#) here.

One-off donations may be made by sending a cheque to the Treasurer, at BRICUP, BM BRICUP, London, WC1N 3XX, UK or by making a bank transfer to BRICUP at

Sort Code 08-92-99

Account Number 65156591

IBAN = GB20 CPBK 0892 9965 1565 91

BIC = CPBK GB22

If you use the direct funds transfer mechanism, please confirm the transaction by sending an explanatory email to treasurer@bricup.org.uk