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The BDS Movement: Why Israel?

The BDS Movement – Past and Present

The BDS movement is currently the most active and best known anti-Israel association. The abbreviation “BDS” stands for “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions.” Officially, the movement was founded in July 2005 by more than 170 organizations, supposedly representing the Palestinian civil society. At least, this is how the BDS movement likes to tell the story.¹ Since 2005, BDS has gained many supporters, even outside the Palestinian territories, among them celebrities like South African archbishop Desmond Tutu, British film director Ken Loach, American philosopher Judith Butler, and ex-Pink Floyd singer Roger Waters. The BDS movement perceives and describes Israel as an “Apartheid state,” like South Africa previously, and calls for a comprehensive economic, political, academic, and artistic boycott, as well as for a withdrawal of investments, an embargo, and coercive measures. Thus, it targets the Jewish state as a whole. It is headed by Omar Barghouti, who, albeit having studied at Tel Aviv University, accuses Israel of “Apartheid,”² “Nazi practices,”³ and “ethnic cleansing.”⁴ He categorically rejects a two-state solution and maintains that any dialogue with Israelis would be “unethical” and “dangerous.”

Another well-known BDS activist is Lebanese-American professor of politics As’ad AbuKhalil, who in 2012 said:

The real aim of BDS is to bring down the state of Israel. [...] That should be stated as an unambiguous goal. There should not be any equivocation on the subject. Justice and freedom for the Palestinians are incompatible with the existence of the state of Israel.⁵

1 Cf. “Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS,” BDS Movement, issued July 9, 2005, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://bdsmovement.net/call>.

2 O. Barghouti, “Besieging Israel’s Siege,” *The Guardian*, August 12, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/aug/12/besieging-israel-siege-palestinian-boycott>.

3 O. Barghouti, “‘The Pianist’ of Palestine,” *countercurrents.org*, issued November 30, 2004, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://www.countercurrents.org/pa-barghouti301104.htm>.

4 O. Barghouti, “No State Has the Right to Exist as a Racist State,” interview by S. Cattori, *Voltairenet.org*, December 7, 2007, <http://www.voltairenet.org/article153536.html>.

5 A. Abu Khalil, “A Critique of Norman Finkelstein on BDS,” *Al-Akhbar English*, issued February 17, 2012, accessed October 3, 2018, <http://english.al-akhbar.com/blogs/angry-corner/critique-norman-finkelstein-bds> [no longer available].

Palestinian-American writer Ahmed Moor, another leading figure of the BDS movement, wrote in 2010:

BDS does mean the end of the Jewish state. [...] I view the BDS movement as a long-term project with radically transformative potential. [...] In other words, BDS is not another step on the way to the final showdown; BDS is *The Final Showdown*.⁶

Activists and supporters of the BDS movement regularly go public with bold and eye-catching campaigns. Every year, for instance, they organize a so-called “Israeli Apartheid Week” in more than fifty cities, especially across the United States, Canada, the UK, and South Africa, featuring numerous rallies and on-campus events. Especially on campuses in the United States and the UK, this is not the only time of the year that BDS activists make their presence felt. In 2010 for example, the University and College Union (UCU), which is the largest further and higher education union in the UK, voted to “sever all relations” with *Histadrut*, which represents the majority of trade unionists in the State of Israel. The cited reason was that *Histadrut* had “supported the Israeli assault on civilians in Gaza in January 2009, and therefore did not deserve the name of a trade union organization.”⁷

Already in May 2007, UCU decided to boycott all academic institutions in Israel.⁸ And BDS did not stop at this point: In a very aggressive manner, student BDS activists have called for the termination of all cooperation between their respective universities and their Israeli counterparts. They try to prevent Israeli scientists from lecturing. If their attempts are not successful, they heckle and massively disturb the lectures. Their goal is to obstruct any dialogue with Israeli scientists. This way, they turn these individuals into mere pieces of a collective to which they assign collective guilt. They don’t judge these scholars by what they do but from where they come. This is evidence of antisemitic and racist thinking.

⁶ A. Moor, “BDS is a Long Term Project with Radically Transformative Potential,” *Mondoweiss*, issued April 22, 2010, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://mondoweiss.net/2010/04/bds-is-a-long-term-project-with-radically-transformative-potential/>.

⁷ “UCU Congress votes to sever relations with Israeli Histadrut Boycott process will be initiated for college in West Bank settlement,” *Palestinian Campaign for the Academic & Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)*, issued May 31, 2010, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://pacbi.org/pacbi140812/?p=1249>.

⁸ Cf. J. Meikle, “Lecturers Vote for Boycott of Israeli Universities,” *The Guardian*, May 31, 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/may/31/highereducation.israel>.

The BDS movement also takes aim at culture. This goes beyond Roger Waters; musicians like Elvis Costello⁹ and Brian Eno cancelled concerts or called on their fellow musicians not to perform in Israel.¹⁰ Some artists even opt against selling any records in Israel. American writer Alice Walker went as far as to refuse to let her prize-winning novel *The Color Purple* be translated into Hebrew.¹¹ Musicians like Carlos Santana¹² and Nick Cave¹³ who resist the pressure for a boycott and decide to perform in the Jewish state are bullied by the BDS movement; the movement uses online campaigns, furious appeals, and protest rallies against these concerts to put pressure on them. Everyone who does not explicitly support the goals of the BDS movement is automatically seen as a political foe. Here, too, the principle of collective liability is applied and especially apparent in the case of Alice Walker: Whoever speaks Hebrew is pronounced guilty.

As the BDS movement declares in its statements, the supposed result of all these efforts is the following: Israel “ends its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands” and “respects, protects and promotes the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties.”¹⁴ What is innocently couched in the language of human rights is nothing less than the dismantlement of the Jewish state. That the BDS movement fails to say which parts of “Arab land” it considers to be under colonization—just the West Bank or perhaps the entire land of Israel?—is no lapse but a deliberate decision. While hypothetically leaving the door open for a two-state solution, the message is designed to resonate with those who want to “liberate all of Palestine,” meaning a No-State-of-Israel solution.

9 Cf. V. Dodd and R. McCarthy, “Elvis Costello cancels concerts in Israel in protest at treatment of Palestinians,” *The Guardian*, May 18, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/may/18/elvis-costello-cancels-israel-concerts>.

10 Cf. S. Harmon, “Brian Eno and Roger Waters Scorn Nick Cave’s ‘Principled Stand’ to Play in Israel,” *The Guardian*, November 22, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2017/nov/22/brian-eno-and-roger-waters-scorn-nick-caves-principled-stand-to-play-in-israel>.

11 Cf. A. Flood, “Alice Walker Declines Request to Publish Israeli Edition of *The Color Purple*,” *The Guardian*, June 20, 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/jun/20/alice-walker-declines-israeli-color-purple>.

12 Cf. N. Barrows-Friedman, “Why is Carlos Santana refusing to honor Israel boycott call?” *Electronic Intifada*, June 29, 2016, <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/why-carlos-santana-refusing-honor-israel-boycott-call>.

13 Cf. R. Reed, “Roger Waters, Brian Eno Criticize Nick Cave for Israel Concerts,” *Rolling Stone*, November 20, 2017, <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/roger-waters-brian-eno-criticize-nick-cave-for-israel-concerts-128927/>.

14 “Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS,” BDS Movement.

The “right of return” on which the Palestinian “refugees” insist is not just based on ideological but also on strategic considerations: Since the refugee status of the Palestinians is inherited by descendants, the number of “refugees” has ballooned from an initial 700,000 to currently five million. Most of these people have never lived in Israel. Their “return” would turn Israel’s Jews into a minority at the mercy of the Arab majority. For these reasons, even American political scholar Norman Finkelstein—otherwise a fervent “anti-Zionist”—has sought to distance himself sharply from the BDS movement. In February 2012, he said in an interview:

They don’t want Israel. They think they’re being very clever. They call it their three tiers: We want the end of the occupation, we want the right of return, and we want equal rights for Arabs in Israel. And they think they are very clever, because they know the result of implementing all three is what? What’s the result? You know and I know what’s the result: there’s no Israel.¹⁵

The BDS campaigns are an integral part of the battle against the Jewish state, which is fought on different fronts and with different weapons: by means of terrorist attacks, bombs, and rockets in the Middle East, by means of boycott activities in Europe and North America. To defeat an enemy with superior military capabilities, the “anti-Zionists” engage in a division of labor: While some attack Israel with brute force, others, invoking human rights, are working on Israel’s demonization and delegitimization in the international arena.

Without exception, everything Israel conducts to defend herself is denounced as a breach of human rights. The reverse argument is that every act against the Jewish state is a vindication for human rights. Subsequently, even Palestinian terrorism is legitimized as “resistance” while Israel’s measures of defense are declared a “genocide”—even more than that, they are declared an unprecedented crime against humanity.

Human rights are not only the central reference point for the BDS movement but also for so-called “critics of Israel” in general. In a remarkable speech in September 2016 during the conference “The Future of the Jewish Communities in Europe” in the European Parliament, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks said:

Throughout history, when people have sought to justify anti-Semitism, they have done so by recourse to the highest source of authority available within the culture. In the Middle Ages, it was religion. So we had religious anti-Judaism. In post-Enlightenment Europe it was science. So we had the twin foundations of Nazi ideology, Social Darwinism and the so-called

¹⁵ “Norman Finkelstein on BDS,” filmed February 2012, YouTube video, 4:40, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iggdO7C70P8>.

Scientific Study of Race. Today the highest source of authority worldwide is human rights. That is why Israel—the only fully functioning democracy in the Middle East with a free press and independent judiciary—is regularly accused of the five cardinal sins against human rights: racism, apartheid, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and attempted genocide.¹⁶

Hence, the antisemite regards the Jew—and the Jewish state as the collective subject—as someone who violates the respective most important sanctuary of his age: The Jew kills the savior, he defiles the pure race, he violates human rights. At the same time, the antisemite perceives himself as being the party of the good and the noble-minded, one of those who save the world from the utmost evil—by getting rid of this evil, by exterminating it.

This is why the BDS movement is not concerned with the well-being of the Palestinians but strives for the greatest possible damage to Israel. The BDS activists don't care about the Palestinians. This already manifests itself in the fact that none of them have ever raised their voice against the Palestinians' complete deprivation of rights in Lebanon, or the carnage that is brought about by the regular fights between Hamas and Fatah.

Violence against Palestinians whose source cannot be traced back to Israel is simply no issue. And they are even less sympathetic toward the Jewish state and its citizens: Never have they protested against Hamas' and Hezbollah's missile attacks against Israel. Never have they turned against the Iranian president's antisemitic outbursts or warned against his plans to acquire nuclear weapons. Never did they call for a boycott of Iranian goods or demand that they should be labeled. That alone suggests that the BDS movement is far from "just" opposing Israeli "occupation." Much more is at stake.

There's No Business Like NGO Business

This becomes clear when we take a look at the genesis of the boycott movement which preceded the BDS movement. Essentially all these campaigns are being waged by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). We can pinpoint the boycott movement's hour of birth to the notorious "World Conference against Racism" which was held by the United Nations in August and September 2001 in Durban, South Africa. Why "notorious"? Because a large majority of the participants

¹⁶ J. Sacks, "The Mutating Virus: Understanding Antisemitism," rabbisacks.org, issued September 27, 2016, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://rabbisacks.org/mutating-virus-understanding-antisemitism/>.

turned this conference into a tribunal against Israel. Israel was put on the pillory as a monster of racism and colonialism.

This had already been looming during the preparatory meetings—one of which had been held in Tehran. The Durban conference’s NGO forum was even worse. Eight-thousand activists from 3,000 NGOs took part in it, among them major and well-known organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.¹⁷ The forum, in its final declaration, accused Israel of being a “racist Apartheid state” and committing “ethnic cleansings” against the Palestinians.¹⁸ These charges were followed by calls for boycotts, sanctions, and the diplomatic isolation of the Jewish state. Meanwhile, Palestinian NGOs sold copies of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* on conference grounds and also distributed other antisemitic pamphlets.¹⁹ One of them displayed a picture of Adolf Hitler. The caption read: “What if I had won? There would be no Israel and no Palestinian’s bloodshed. The rest is your guess.”²⁰ Jewish participants of the NGO Forum were repeatedly attacked, verbally, and physically.²¹ All this happened at a time when Palestinian terrorists conducted bloody suicide bombing attacks in Israel on an almost daily basis—and just a few days before 9/11.

In the following years, the forum’s final document exceedingly turned into a plan of action for NGOs which view themselves as pro-Palestinian. It was the base for subsequent NGO campaigns in which Israel was portrayed as a revenant of South Africa under Apartheid; much of this can be found in the BDS movement’s statements. The *Durban strategy* was born: From now on, the Jewish state should be demonized and delegitimized through a language couched in human rights, by citing dubious “testimonies” of alleged victims and by fading out the victims of Palestinian terrorism. Among the early examples of this kind of campaigning are the attempt to depict the Israeli army’s anti-terror operation in Jenin in 2002 as a “massacre against the civilian population”; the concerted call for an academic boycott against Israel in British universities; and the myriad

17 Cf. United Nations, “Report of the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. Durban, August 31st – September 8th, 2001,” https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/451954/files/A_CONF.189_12%28PartIII%29-EN.pdf, 32.

18 “NGO Forum Declaration,” World Forum against Racism, issued September 3, 2001, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://i-p-o.org/racism-ngo-decl.htm>.

19 Cf. M. Elliott, “The Racism Conference: The Disgrace in Durban,” *Time*, September 9, 2001, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,174283,00.html>.

20 T. Lantos, “The Durban Debacle. An Insider’s View of the World Racism Conference at Durban,” *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 26, no. 1 (2002): 34.

21 Cf. “Submission to the UN Preparatory Committee for the Durban Review Conference,” NGO Monitor, issued 2007, accessed April 1, 2020, https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session3/IL/NGOM_ISR_UPR_S3_2008anx_DurbanPrepcomSubmission.pdf.

of declarations made during the Lebanon war in 2006 in which Israel was accused of war crimes and a breach of human rights, while the terrorist attacks by Hezbollah were downplayed.

And let us not forget the close cooperation between NGOs and the Goldstone commission, set up by the notorious UN Human Rights Council. There is a statistic from summer 2015 which reveals very clearly the Human Rights Council's nature and why it does not deserve its noble title.²² The analysis shows which countries have been condemned how many times since the inception of the Human Rights Council in 2006 until 2015. The result: In total, there were 62 condemnations of Israel, and 55 of the rest of the world combined. Again: 62 versus 55. In the country ranking, Syria, with 15 condemnations, ranks way behind the Jewish state, followed by Myanmar (12), North Korea (8), and Iran (5). Paradieses of human rights like Afghanistan, Lebanon, or Pakistan are given a clean record, whereas Israel is on the Human Rights Council's agenda, in every single session—a decision which was taken upon the council's founding. "Item 7" is a permanent agenda item focused on the "Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories." Needless to say, Israel is the only country in the world to which the council dedicates a permanent agenda item.

In 2009, the Human Rights Council set up the aforementioned Goldstone commission which was supposed to investigate the Gaza war of 2008/2009. Eventually, it published a report²³ in which Israel was accused of the most serious violations of human rights, while it barely criticized Hamas. In large parts, the report was based on dubious, unverified accounts, and testimonies submitted by anti-Israel NGOs. More than 500 of such references can be found in the document. Many of the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations whose statements and assessments were incorporated in the Goldstone Report explicitly support the BDS movement.

So there is an amalgamation of the United Nations and anti-Israel NGOs. This even extends to the staff: Leading members of the Goldstone commission have, for many years, been active in NGOs which oppose Israel. Richard Goldstone, the commission's chairman, worked in a leading position at Human Rights Watch—an organization which has been criticized, among other things, for a fundraising event in Saudi Arabia in which it pitched its "fight" against "pro-Is-

²² Cf. "Updated: Chart of all UNHRC Condemnations," UN Watch, issued August 11, 2015, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://www.unwatch.org/updated-chart-of-all-unhrc-condemnations/>.

²³ Cf. "Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict," Human Rights Council, issued September 25, 2009, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>.

rael pressure groups.”²⁴ It was only after his appointment as the chairman of the investigative commission that Goldstone left Human Rights Watch. Previously, he had signed an open letter, circulated by Amnesty International, which was addressed to Ban Ki-moon, at that time Secretary-General of the United Nations, and decried the Israeli operation as an “attack on Gaza’s civilian population.”²⁵ Among the co-signers were Hina Jilani and Desmond Travers, later members of the Goldstone commission. Another member of the Goldstone commission was Christine Chinkin, a former consultant to Amnesty International. In January 2009, Chinkin was a co-signer of a protest letter titled “Israel’s bombing of Gaza is no self-defense but a war crime.”²⁶ So these ladies and gentlemen had already rendered a verdict before they were asked by the UN to enquire war-related events.

To say it more bluntly: The boycott campaigns, the Apartheid analogies, the drastic condemnations, the totally one-sided reports—this is all done with the goal to demonize Israel and to cast it as an illegitimate state which has no right to exist but has to disappear. The French historian Léon Poliakov once noted that Israel was “the Jew among the nations.”²⁷ This dictum highlights two things: the isolation which turns Israel into a pariah; and the morphing of antisemitism, from targeting the individual Jew to turning against the Jewish state as a collective subject. Accordingly, the ideologemes of modern antisemitism closely resemble classic antisemitism. I would like to demonstrate this using a recent example from Germany, in which BDS activists collaborated with the established politics.

Don’t Buy from the Jewish State!

In November 2015, the European commission made the decision that fruits, vegetables, and cosmetics produced by Israeli companies based in the West Bank, in

²⁴ J. Goldberg, “Fundraising Corruption at Human Rights Watch,” *The Atlantic*, July 15, 2009, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2009/07/fundraising-corruption-at-human-rights-watch/21345/>.

²⁵ “Amnesty International’s Goldstone Campaign: With a Review of Statements from other NGOs,” NGO Monitor, issued October 22, 2009, accessed April 1, 2020 https://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/amnesty_international_goldstone_s_cheat_sheet_.

²⁶ “Issue 201: U.N. Gaza Inquiry Challenged for Bias by 50 U.K., Canadian Lawyers,” UN Watch, issued September 13, 2009, accessed April 1, 2020, <https://www.unwatch.org/issue-201-u-n-gaza-inquiry-challenged-bias-50-u-k-canadian-lawyers>.

²⁷ L. Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism, Volume 2: From Mohammed to the Marranos*, trans. N. Gerardi (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 149.

Eastern Jerusalem or in the Golan Heights which are to be imported to the European Union must carry a special label and must no longer be sold under the label “country of origin: Israel.”²⁸ This decree was described as a step toward more transparency because the consumers ought to have the right to know whether an article comes from the “occupied territories” or Israel proper. However, goods from Turkish-occupied Cyprus or Western Sahara—which is currently occupied by Morocco—are not subject to such labeling requirements. This practice solely affects the Jewish state.

So this decree was based on genuinely political reasons. In the view of the European Union, it seems, the Jewish state and its settlement policies are the only culprit to be blamed for the breakdown of the peace process. There is no mention of the fact that there are quite a few Palestinians for whom the *whole* of Israel is an illegal settlement project, and who underscore their point of view with rockets, bombs, and all kinds of terrorist attacks. It says a lot that even goods from those settlements which, according to every single hitherto proposed peace plan would remain part of Israel, are subject to the decree. This is playing into the cards of those who are yearning for a Palestine “from the river to the sea.” The EU decree is an implicit call for a boycott. Its goal is to make consumers refrain from buying the goods in question or, better yet, to prompt the vendors to pull them from the shelves. The labeling requirement furthers and promotes the demonization, delegitimization, and isolation of Israel. Some especially impatient people in the German cities of Bremen, Berlin, Bonn, and Hamburg did not want to wait for the EU to implement its decree.²⁹ Wearing white protective clothing—as if to protect against a dangerous contamination—they play-acted as controllers. Attached to their uniforms were home-made labels identifying them as “inspectors,” followed by the text “label requirement for goods from illegal Israeli settlements.”³⁰ The activists then went to places where they suspected such goods: big department stores, farmers markets, and drugstores.

28 “Interpretative Notice on Indication of Origin of Goods from the Territories Occupied by Israel since June 1967,” European Commission, issued November 11, 2015, accessed April 1, 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/20151111_interpretative_notice_indication_of_origin_en.pdf.

29 Cf. A. Feuerherdt, “Die antisemitische Vorhut der EU,” *Lizas Welt*, November 30, 2015, <https://lizaswelt.net/2015/11/30/die-antisemitische-vorhut-der-eu/>.

30 J.-P. Hein, “‘Inspektore’ suchen Produkte aus Israel!,” *Bild Online*, November 30, 2015, <https://www.bild.de/regional/bremen/kundgebungen/inspektore-suchen-produkte-aus-israel-43598854.bild.html>.

“We are acting on suspicion,” said their spokesman Claus Walischewski from Bremen.³¹ As is well known, the suspicion that the Jews don’t play by the rules has often in Germany’s history been sufficient to occupy the moral high ground and to lecture them. This is why Walischewski and his comrades labeled *all* Israeli products they could find. Not with a yellow star, of course—only Nazis do that—but with paper flags. “Attention,” the flags read, “attention, this product *might* originate from an illegal Israeli settlement.” Truly, an altruistic service to human rights, isn’t it? Since Claus Walischewski is Amnesty International’s regional spokesman in Bremen, he is above suspicion of doing anything reprehensible, let alone antisemitic.

In Bonn, too, self-styled “inspectors” in white protection coats showed up. Here they even carried forms which they had specifically prepared for this purpose.³² With true German diligence, they registered the results of their rigorous inspection under the headline “German civil society—inspection of products by Israeli companies.”

Indeed, the BDS movement has a sense of symbolism. This alone illustrates the ideological foundation and motivation: antisemitism, even if they deny it. The uniform-like protection clothing, suggesting that there was a risk of disease; the gang-like organization as a self-mandated executor of the people’s will under the label “civilian society”; the thorough inspection and detailed recording in lists, as a first step toward cleansing; the suspicion, that is, the rumor about the Jews, just as Theodor Adorno had defined antisemitism; and finally, the tagging of the article, that is, the stigmatization of everything which is perceived as Jewish, and the call for a boycott. The “inspectors’” intent is obvious. They turned the Nazi slogan “Don’t buy from the Jew” into “Don’t buy from the Jew among the states.” This, in a nutshell, is the rallying cry of the BDS movement.

And yet, the BDS activists are not the core problem but just the vanguard. Even if they feel as though they have authority, they do not wield immediate power. This was clearly shown when a major drugstore chain ordered the BDS’ Bremen group to stay away from all its stores. The EU commission’s labeling decree is much more serious. It makes mandatory—in the whole European Union—

31 J.-P. Koopmann, “Vorsicht, vielleicht verboten,” *taz*, November 28, 2015, <http://www.taz.de/%215255916/>.

32 Cf. “BDS-Inspektion bei Galeria Kaufhof in Bonn,” BDS-Kampagne, issued November 29, 2015, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://bds-kampagne.de/2015/11/29/bds-inspektion-bei-galeria-kaufhof-in-bonn/>. The columns read: “Article,” “declaration of origin,” “actual origin,” “Israeli company on the label,” “German company on the label,” “bar code” and “suspicion.” No one shall claim the persecution of Jewish crime in Germany was not following due bureaucratic procedure.

what German BDS activists merely tried to anticipate in a few stores. It turns their resentment into law, causing a damage of much bigger proportions—not necessarily economically but politically speaking. Moreover, the EU decree shows that the demands of the BDS movement have become part of European policies.

In Lieu of a Conclusion

I hope to have shed light on the strategies behind the campaigns to boycott and delegitimize Israel, their consequences, and the alliances which are forged in the process. The BDS movement is an essential part of it, and deserves attention, especially in those cases where its ideology and activities are “successful.” That’s, for instance, the case when artists cancel concerts, when Israeli scientists are no longer able to speak in universities, when unions sever their ties to Histadrut, when anti-Israel NGOs gain significant influence in institutions of the United Nations and use it to further the demonization of the Jewish state, or when the European Union labels Israeli goods, and by so doing implicitly calls for a boycott.

In his book *Catch the Jew*, American-Israeli writer Tuvia Tenenbom sharply criticized the NGOs active in the Middle East and their sponsors in Europe.³³ During his research, he came across many associations whose supposed goal was to assert peace and human rights. Actually, however, Tenenbom said, “they devote themselves to the destruction of the state of Israel and the delegitimization of its Jewish citizens.” The European activists, according to Tenenbom, “travel thousands of miles to catch the Jew—wherever they find him.” They thought of themselves as “righteous people” but were “ailing from a superiority complex, and their Jew-hatred is unbearable.” Tenenbom nails what anti-Israel campaigns like the BDS movement are all about: The alleged commitment to peace, freedom, and humanitarianism is nothing but a rhetorical gimmick to cover up the hate against Jews in general and the Jewish state in particular. The boycotts therefore do not serve any purpose of human rights, civilian society or humanitarian causes; attacking Israel is a goal in itself.

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³³ Cf. T. Tenenbom, *Catch the Jew!* (Jerusalem: Gefen, 2015).

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