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<https://www.spiegel.de/kultur/literatur/sharon-dodua-otoo-stadt-bochum-hat-preisverleihung-wegen-moeglicher-bds-naehe-ausgesetzt-a-oaf3d803-b889-49af-9c10-94b885615e64>

Award ceremony suspended due to possible BDS proximity

In March 2024, the author Sharon Dodua Otoo will receive the Peter Weiss Prize from the city of Bochum. Now the award has been suspended: Otoo is said to have supported the boycott of Israel.

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Writer Otoo: She is said to have supported an organization associated with the BDS

Photo:Annette Riedl / picture alliance / dpa

The city of [Bochum](#) is suspending an originally planned award to the author and Bachmann Prize winner [Sharon Dodua Otoo](#) because of possible support for a boycott of [Israel](#). On November 10th, a jury voted for the German-British writer ("Adas Raum") as the next recipient of the Peter Weiss Prize, worth 15,000 euros. The city announced on Tuesday that it had recently become known that she supported an organization associated with the BDS.

The matter is being examined. If the allegations prove true, awarding the prize to Otoo would be unthinkable, it was said. A comment from the author

was not immediately available on Tuesday. A spokeswoman for her publisher, S. Fischer, pointed out that the author is currently in Australia and may therefore not be able to respond immediately.

Already the second price shift

BDS stands for “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions”. The campaign calls for a boycott of the State of Israel and Israeli products because of its actions against Palestinians. The Bundestag condemned the BDS movement in a resolution dated May 17, 2019. Their argumentation patterns and methods are anti-Semitic. The North Rhine-Westphalia state parliament had already condemned the campaign in 2018 as anti-Semitic and anti-Israel and called on state institutions and municipalities not to support groups close to it. Many communities, including Bochum, joined.

Otoo, who lives in Berlin and was awarded the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize in 2016, [appears by name on the website of the “Artists for Palestine UK” campaign](#) as one of more than 1,500 supporters. The artists signing there are therefore committed to a cultural boycott of Israel, for example by refusing professional invitations to the country or the financing of their work by the Israeli government. The blog “Ruhrbarone” reported on it after the city announced Otoo as the future winner on Monday. The award was scheduled to be presented on March 10th.^p

In October, the award for the Palestinian author [Adania Shibli was suspended](#) after criticism of her book [“A Minor Matter”](#) and her support for the BDS-affiliated author Kamila Shamsie arose.