

Contents

- **BDS Original motion:**
- **Max's Speech :**
- **Amendments**

BDS MOTION:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f2c47ed063b971c761be7b4/t/5fb5b0678415242a51536a3a/1605742701168/AGM20_v01.pdf (motion 11)

WHEREAS the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement is working to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians and pressure Israel to comply with international law;

WHEREAS the state of Israel is occupying and colonising Palestinian land, discriminating against Palestinian citizens of Israel and denying Palestinian refugees the right to return to their homes;

WHEREAS the BDS movement is inspired by the South African campaign to bring an end to Apartheid South Africa;

WHEREAS BDS is now a vibrant global movement made up of unions, academic associations, churches and grassroots movements across the world; **WHEREAS** the Scarborough Campus Students' Union first joined the BDS movement in 2013 at an Annual General Meeting and has been an active supporter of BDS initiatives on campus and in the broader community since;

WHEREAS this year under the current Executive Committee, members of the Executive have taken steps to undermine the Students' Union's stated position on the BDS movement and Israeli apartheid by: (1) **displaying an Israeli flag inside** the window Vice-President Ext ernal, Chaman Bukhari's office, and (2) removing Toronto Students for Justice in Palestine's posters in the Student Centre that were meant to commemorate Nakba Day;

BE IT RESOLVED that, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union reaffirm its commitment to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement by committing to actively support initiatives that raise awareness about the state of Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestine and war crimes against Palestinian peoples;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union refrain from engaging with organizations or participating in events that further normalizes Israeli apartheid; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Scarborough Campus Students' Union's Board of Directors draft a policy resolution to endorse the BDS movement to ensure that future elected representatives and staff of the Students' Union uphold our collective commitment to justice in Palestine; and **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the policy resolution mentioned above be presented to the next Annual General Meeting for adoption

My Speech

Good evening, My name is Maxwell Fine. I am Co-President of Jewish Student Life here at UTSC. I am speaking against the motion. I urge everyone to vote down the motion as it stands, or to at least vote for the amendments I propose.

It is my firm belief, after consulting TSJP that the original intent of this motion was to include all persons and organizations that are "zionist" or "Pro-israel" as apart groups targeted by this motion to be boycotted.

Keep in mind that the vast majority of Jewish people and Jewish organizations are "zionist" or "pro-israel" inclusive of those that are actively against the crimes of Israel and the occupation / apartheid.

This motion if passed it will bar the SCSU from communicating with Hillel, and Jewish student life. It will almost certainly prevent Israeli and Jewish students from running for the SCSU. There will be no safe place for Jewish people at UTSC, as they will be unwelcome and excluded from the SCSU.

Even if the amendments pass, including TSJP's definition of normalization of Israel apartheid, we have no faith that the SCSU will not use this BDS motion to intentionally harm the Jewish community here at UTSC.

The University of Toronto Student Unions have an abhorrent track record, when deciding who and who isn't participating in the Normalization of Israel apartheid, which is the key phrase in the motion. Last year, Hillel, the largest Jewish organization for university students, was not given support for a Kosher food petition by the Graduate student Union, on account that Hillel is "pro-israel". The Graduate student union responded to Hillel that as they support BDS, it would be against the will of the membership for them to support any petition or have any involvement with Hillel.

The only Israel stance that Hillels are allowed to have is that the Israeli people have the right to live. Attacking Hillel – a nonpolitical Jewish organization giving a minority community and a voice on campus. – is an example of BDS being antisemitic, clear and simple. And that sort of behavior is, unfortunately, the norm of BDS. It is to be expected. At least from BDS international, and here at UofT. It is why I am speaking against this motion.

We have no faith that the SCSU will not make such a similar ruling, and that Hillel and Jewish student life are not a part of those organizations which are targeted by the motion.

To be clear, there are many Israelis and diaspora Jews who are pro-palestine because they are "zionist" or "pro-israel." Zionism can be seen as a spectrum. Although more extreme and right-wing Zionists hold high positions in the Israeli government, the majority of Jews do not feel this way. Smearing the belief that Jews should be able to live in the Levant in such an official way can result in the isolation and demonization of Jewish students. and it has before on other campuses.

Take **Maayan Belding-Zido** the Israeli author of, **“Progressive Jews, We Must Fight Against Israeli Annexation and Occupation”** and, **“Stop Using Israel as an Excuse to Not Support Black Lives Matter”** for example. She thinks, and I quote “To be a Zionist today, to promote the Jewish people’s right to self-determination, we have a duty to recongnize that Palaestininans also have that right, and that there can be no peace or justice while Israel continues to occupy their lands. Jewish Israelis’ Safety, our communities, and our livelihoods depend on the cause of Palestinina justice.” end quote.

There are IDF groups that refuse to serve in the occupation, and apartheid in the Westbank. Courage to Refuse is one such an organization, they refuse too and I quote “to fight beyond the 1967 borders in order to dominate, expel, starve and humiliate an entire people.” They refuse to serve because they are Zionists, I quote, “Refusal to serve in the (Occupied) Territories is Zionism”.

If my use of the word “zionism” has struck you as odd, or incorrect. I assure you I used it fairly, I would like to add that many self described anti-zionists use anti-zionism to mean criticism of israel. They aren't actually anti-zionits. The conflation of the terms Zionist with anti-palestinian, and pro-palestinel with anti-Zionist is an unfortunate event, It is important however to briefly mention the conflation of the terms, and how they are widely miss used, especially for those who have never heard of Zionists who are against the occupation, apartheid. Zionists who are against settler-colonialism and nationalism.

It is also important to note that it is more than justified for Palestinians, and that Palestinians have the right to call their criticisms, and actions against the crimes of Israel anti-Zionist.

Personally, I am against the occupation, the apartheid, the blockade. I support the right of return for the Palestinian people. Furthermore, I support and partake in the strategic boycotting of goods made by illegal west bank settlements. As well as a plethora of companies and organizations that are complicit in those actions. I say this as a Zionist, not despite it.

There is a difference between boycotting organizations and people who are complicit, in Palestinian suffering and being in support of the BDS brand.

BDS does not concern us because it challenges a foreign government or stands up for Palestinians two things crucial in the fight for justice and peace -- BDS concerns us because of the antisemitism this organization has continually stoked and tolerated, antisemitism fundamental to its mission and leaders. Additionally, through its perpetuation of its narratives of the conflict, BDS often creates a culture where the fight for Palestinian rights is weaponized to polarize and blame Jews not involved in the government of Israel at all.

I cannot in good conscience support this motion as written.

Taken out, may confuse audience

I would proudly vote for this motion, if it was not associated with BDS and explicitly protects Jewish Organizations on campus. As it stands, this is not a clean motion

Very Brief background info, source for claim about BDS boycotting Hillel:

<https://thevarsity.ca/2019/11/24/opinion-access-to-kosher-food-should-not-be-an-issue/>

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/u-of-toronto-student-union-boycotts-kosher-food-on-campus-over-israel-divestment/>

Quote Sources:

<https://www.heyalma.com/progressive-jews-we-must-fight-against-israeli-annexation-and-occupation/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Refusal_to_serve_in_the_IDF#:~:text=Refusal%20to%20serve%20in%20the%20IDF%20is%20when%20citizens%20of,occupation%20of%20the%20Palestinian%20territories.

Other hey alma article mentioned:

<https://www.heyalma.com/stop-using-israel-as-an-excuse-to-not-support-black-lives-matter/>

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENTS

WHEREAS this year under the current Executive Committee, members of the Executive have taken steps to undermine the Students' Union's stated position on the BDS movement and Israeli apartheid by: (1) displaying an Israeli flag inside the window Vice-President External, Chaman Bukhari's office, and (2) removing Toronto Students for Justice in Palestine's posters in the Student Centre that were meant to commemorate Nakba Day;

-Took out israel flag mention, Becomes

WHEREAS last year under the former Executive Committee, Toronto Students for Justice in Palestine's posters in the Student Centre that were meant to commemorate Nakba Day were taken down;

Strike the mention of BDS in the WHEREAS clauses

RESOLVED CLAUSES

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Scarborough Campus Students' Union will not refrain from engaging with Jewish organizations on campus: such as Hillel and Jewish Student Life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, Scarborough Campus Students' Union will recognize the collective rights of all peoples to self-determination in their respective homelands as enshrined in the UN Charter and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union That Normalization of Israeli apartheid is defined as: creating situations or circumstances where by people can easily ignore oppression and power dynamics that the state of Israel imposes on Palestine/Palestinians:

Another change, not an addition:

BE IT RESOLVED that, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union reaffirm its commitment to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement by committing to actively support initiatives that raise awareness about the state of Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestine and war crimes against Palestinian peoples;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Scarborough Campus Students' Union's Board of Directors draft a policy resolution to endorse the BDS movement to ensure that future elected representatives and staff of the Students' Union uphold our collective commitment to justice in Palestine; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy resolution mentioned above be presented to the next Annual General Meeting for adoption

Becomes:

BE IT RESOLVED that, the Scarborough Campus Students' Union will dissociate its boycott with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement, it will maintain its position of committing to actively support initiatives that raise awareness about the state of Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestine and war crimes against Palestinian peoples, and supports the Palestinian Right of Return;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Scarborough Campus Students' Union's Board of Directors draft a policy resolution to ensure that future elected representatives and staff of the Students' Union uphold our collective commitment to justice in Palestine; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy resolution mentioned above be presented to the next Annual General Meeting for adoption