

Resolution regarding BDS

Whereas, Palestinian civil society issued a call in 2005 for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel; and

Whereas, Members of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) have organized various forums for discussion and debate of that call through MESA's commitment to academic freedom; and

Whereas, International intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including Palestinian and Israeli monitoring groups, have documented and verified successive Israeli governments' systematic violations of the human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli direct or indirect control; and

Whereas, Systematic violations include restricting freedom of movement for Palestinians; isolating, undermining, or otherwise attacking Palestinian educational institutions; harassing Palestinian professors, teachers, and students; harassing Israeli professors and students criticizing Israeli policies; destroying, confiscating, or otherwise rendering Palestinian archival material inaccessible; and maintaining inequality in educational resources between Palestinians and Israelis; and

Whereas, Israeli universities are imbricated in these systematic violations through their provision of direct assistance to the Israeli military and intelligence establishments; and

Whereas, The United States government has systematically shielded successive Israeli governments from being held accountable for such violations and facilitated them through unprecedented diplomatic, military, and economic support; and

Recalling that the BDS campaign against Israel is one that targets institutions and not individuals; and

Recalling that MESA recognizes the right of scholars to academic freedom as well as the right of scholars to choose whether or not to participate in an academic boycott;

Be it resolved that the majority of the MESA membership

(1) Endorses the 2005 call of Palestinian civil society for BDS against Israel; and

(2) Directs the MESA Board of Directors to work in consultation with the Committee on Academic Freedom to give effect to the spirit and intent of this resolution, in a manner consistent with MESA's bylaws as well as relevant US federal, state, and local laws.