

State of Palestine

دولة فلسطين

**Association of Palestinian
Local Authorities**



**الاتحاد الفلسطيني
للهيئات المحلية**

Association of Palestinian Local Authorities
Ramallah, 10 October 2017

To:

The city councils of Frankfurt, Munich, Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne
All German city councils and parliaments concerned

Regarding: Motions declaring the BDS movement to be “anti-Semitic” and announcing a city policy of non-cooperation

Dear City Councils of Frankfurt, Munich, Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne,
Dear Members of all City Councils and Parliaments in Germany,

On behalf of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities (APLA) and our members, towns and villages in occupied Palestine (West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip), I convey to you our deep concern and dismay about motions calling for “No Cooperation with the anti-Semitic BDS movement (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions)”. We understand that motions of this kind are currently being submitted or have already been adopted in the cities of Frankfurt, Munich, Berlin, Hamburg and – most sadly - even in Cologne, sister city of Bethlehem in Palestine.

APLA urges German city councils to give no support to any such motions because they contradict the facts, international law and UN resolutions pertaining to Israel and Palestinian people, the principles of international solidarity and partnership among our cities, and are an insult to human intelligence and dignity.

APLA is well informed about and supports the BDS movement, just like the overwhelming majority of city and village councils and associations, unions and institutions of Palestinians oppressed by Israel's illegal occupation.

On this basis, we would like to draw your attention to the fact that BDS is a worldwide movement that has been led by Palestinian civil society. The movement seeks to contribute to a situation in which the Palestinian people can finally realize the fundamental human rights which are universally recognized: freedom from the Israeli occupation and self-determination, non-discrimination and full equality for Israel's Palestinian citizens, and the right of the refugees to return. For this aim, the BDS movement carries out and calls for non-violent boycotts, divestment and sanctions against those who deny us these rights: the State of Israel, as well as business companies and institutions which provide material support to Israel's illegal occupation, settlements and human rights violations. As such, the BDS movement is a legitimate human rights movement that is rightfully supported by people worldwide, including in Germany.

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Accordingly, we urge you once more to study the facts and reject baseless motions that equate the non-violent BDS movement for Palestinian human rights with anti-Semitism. Please be aware that we are counting on German city councils and parliaments to respect international law and to support the human rights of Palestinians. At the minimum, we expect German cities to align their position with that of the EU which has declared last year that it respects the right of European citizens to carry out BDS campaigns because this falls under the right to freedom of expression.¹

Finally, it is our hope that in the future you will consult us on matters concerning the Palestinian people and our cities and villages in occupied Palestine. APLA would welcome such a step as a way to strengthen understanding and cooperation between local government in Germany and Palestine.

With respect and sincere greetings,

Musa F. Hadid, President

Association of Palestinian Local Authorities



¹<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2016-005122&language=EN>