



# THE ELECTRONIC INTIFADA

## California community college first to pass Israel divestment resolution

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[Activism and BDS Beat \(/blog/activism-and-bds-beat\)](/blog/activism-and-bds-beat)

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Israeli occupation forces use a Caterpillar bulldozer to destroy a Palestinian home in the al-Tur neighborhood in Jerusalem, May 2013. (Sliman Khader / APA images)

A community college in Cupertino, California, has become the first educational institution of its kind in the US to support a resolution in favor of divestment from companies that profit from Israel's violations of Palestinian rights.

The [resolution](#)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MnyhnKO4EV8dYcwzLMdN92Y6j2kdDktOv5lk9ByW7aI/edit>), which the student senate [passed](#)

(<https://lavozdeanza.com/news/2017/03/21/dasb-senate-passes-israel->

[divestment-resolution/](#)) on 15 March, urges the De Anza College's board of trustees to pull the college's investments from three US-based corporations that enable Israel's rights violations – [Hewlett-Packard](#) (<https://electronicintifada.net/tags/hewlett-packard>), [Motorola Solutions](#) (<https://electronicintifada.net/tags/motorola>) and [Caterpillar](#) (<https://electronicintifada.net/tags/caterpillar>) – as well as from [G4S](#) (<https://electronicintifada.net/tags/g4s>), the largest private security firm in the world.

G4S has provided equipment and services to Israeli military checkpoints and inside prisons where Palestinians have been tortured.

Due to mounting international boycott pressure, G4S [announced](#) (<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/g4s-ditches-israel-businesses>) last December that it was exiting most of its businesses with Israel, but [remains co-owner](#) (<https://bdsmovement.net/news/under-bds-pressure-g4s-ends-most-illegal-business-israel>) of a police training center.

The resolution also calls on the community college to implement a socially responsible investment policy.

In authoring the resolution, members of Students for Justice at De Anza investigated and discussed themes of mass incarceration, state violence and settler-colonialism from the US to Palestine, according to Sara Elzeiny, a Students for Justice member.

The resolution points out that Hewlett-Packard not only provides equipment to Israeli checkpoints which “restrict the freedom of movement of Palestinians, facilitate discrimination against Palestinians, and reinforce a stratification of citizenship,” but also profits from mass incarceration and the detention of undocumented persons in the US.

“You have border patrol and stop-and-frisk [laws] in the US, and in the occupied territories, you have border patrol and checkpoints and the Israeli army,” Elzeiny told The Electronic Intifada, adding that US police and Israeli soldiers have partnered in militarized training exercises.

Students for Justice works on a number of human rights and environmental issues, Elzeiny said, from mobilizing against police violence and resisting military recruitment on campus to campaigning for fossil fuel divestment. They are also joining the movement to resist the [Dakota Access pipeline](#)

(<https://electronicintifada.net/tags/dakota-access-pipeline>) and support indigenous rights at [Standing Rock \(https://electronicintifada.net/tags/standing-rock\)](https://electronicintifada.net/tags/standing-rock).

The decision to support Palestinian rights was a clear one, she explained.

“Divestment takes a concrete step that pushes against the status quo that says we should normalize military intervention and occupation in a region,” Elzeiny said.

The vote to divest passed 12-1, with four student senators abstaining, [according \(https://lavozeanza.com/news/2017/03/21/dasb-senate-passes-israel-divestment-resolution/\)](https://lavozeanza.com/news/2017/03/21/dasb-senate-passes-israel-divestment-resolution/) to the campus newspaper.

## Growing campaign

The push for divestment at De Anza College is part of the growing student campaign in support of Palestinian rights.

Students for Justice at De Anza worked with other activists, including members of Students for Justice in Palestine at nearby San Jose State University, which in 2015 [passed a resolution \(https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/broad-coalition-passes-divestment-call-san-jose-state\)](https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/broad-coalition-passes-divestment-call-san-jose-state) demanding the university divest from companies that profit from Israel’s violations of Palestinian rights.

San Jose State became California’s [first state university campus \(http://sjpwest.org/tag/californiastateuniversity/\)](http://sjpwest.org/tag/californiastateuniversity/) to pass a divestment resolution regarding “companies complicit in the Israeli occupation of Palestine,” while [seven out of nine \(https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/uc-davis-senators-vote-divest-citing-israels-harm-student-welfare\)](https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/uc-davis-senators-vote-divest-citing-israels-harm-student-welfare) undergraduate campuses of the [University of California \(https://electronicintifada.net/tags/university-california\)](https://electronicintifada.net/tags/university-california) have passed resolutions urging the UC’s governing body to pull its investments from companies that profit from Israel’s occupation.

Israel-aligned groups, meanwhile, are [pushing \(https://electronicintifada.net/tags/anti-bds-laws\)](https://electronicintifada.net/tags/anti-bds-laws) for [state \(https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/activists-fight-new-anti-bds-legislation-across-us\)](https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/activists-fight-new-anti-bds-legislation-across-us) and [federal \(https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/marco-rubio-introduces-senate-bill-attacking-bds-movement\)](https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/nora-barrows-friedman/marco-rubio-introduces-senate-bill-attacking-bds-movement) legislation aimed at silencing and criminalizing boycott activism.

Last month, the state senate of New York [fast-tracked](#) (<http://palestinelegal.org/news/2017/3/8/legal-orgs-condemn-anti-bds-bills-fast-tracked-in-new-york-state-senate-today-1>) three separate bills that create a blacklist of BDS activists, prohibit student-led boycott campaigns and threaten academic associations supporting the academic boycott.

Palestine Legal called these bills “blatantly unconstitutional attacks on First Amendment rights to protest and dissent.”

At De Anza, students know they “have a lot of work ahead,” Elzeiny said, as they take the resolution to the college’s financial governing board.

Even if the board rejects the students’ demands, she said that the resolution – and the larger campaign of education on Palestinian rights – starts a necessary conversation on campus.

“Trying to make our organization the face of this discourse has made other activists want to learn about Palestine,” she said.

In 2015, a broad coalition of students [brought a resolution](#) (<http://sjpwest.org/tag/community-colleges/>) to divest all 112 community colleges in California from companies that profit from Israel’s rights violations. The resolution was [defeated](#) (<http://www.jweekly.com/2015/05/08/senators-for-community-colleges-reject-divestment/>).

*Editor’s note: A previous version of this article indicated that the resolution has to be brought to De Anza’s board of directors. Instead, it is the board of trustees which votes on implementation of the divestment resolution and a socially responsible investment policy. It has been corrected.*

► [BDS \(/tags/bds\)](#) [De Anza Community College \(/tags/de-anza-community-college\)](#) [Cupertino \(/tags/cupertino\)](#) [Bay Area \(/tags/bay-area\)](#) [Students for Justice in Palestine \(/tags/students-justice-palestine\)](#) [campus activism \(/tags/campus-activism\)](#) [San Jose State University \(/tags/san-jose-state-university\)](#) [University of California \(/tags/university-california\)](#) [Sara Elzeiny \(/tags/sara-elzeiny\)](#) [G4S \(/tags/g4s\)](#) [Motorola \(/tags/motorola\)](#) [Hewlett-Packard \(/tags/hewlett-packard\)](#) [caterpillar \(/tags/caterpillar\)](#)

## Comments



### [Community Colleges Divestment Resolution](#)

[\(/comment/58391#comment-58391\)](#)

[\(/comment/58391#comment-58391\)](#) Chris Yatooma replied on Sun, 04/09/2017 - 17:15

Hi Nora: I was so pleased De Anza College passed a resolution. You should know that Sacramento City Community College student government passed on that same day, by a vote of 14-2, a similar divestment resolution. I'm waiting for the student body to post the minutes from the March 15 meeting where the vote occurred. Once that happens, I planned to share this information with the BNC so they can add it to their list of colleges/universities supporting divestment. Activists in the Sacramento area are looking to have similar resolutions passed at a few of the other community colleges in the area over the next month. Thanks. Chris.



### [BDS against apartheid Israel is following the South African path](#)

[\(/comment/58661#comment-58661\)](#)

[\(/comment/58661#comment-58661\)](#) [Pauline Park](#)  
(<http://www.paulinepark.com/>) replied on Sat, 04/15/2017 - 15:52

This is how it started when the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa launched the campaign for BDS there; it took 35 years, but it finally brought down the apartheid regime in South Africa. Israel is a harder nut to crack in some ways but the fact that Gov. Andrew Cuomo & Zionists across the country are trying to push unconstitutional bans on BDS show that it's the most effective strategy for challenging Israel's apartheid regime. Kudos to De Anza College's student senate for standing in solidarity with the Palestinian people and making history~!