



PSYCHOLOGISTS AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

BDS: A Guide for Psychologists and Allied Mental Health Professionals

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What Is BDS and Its History?

BDS, or “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions” calls for countries, businesses, and universities to sever ties with Israel. It is a network composed of anti-Israel activists and NGOs solely designed to target, isolate, and delegitimize the democratic state of Israel.

“[Boycott](#)” refers to a coordinated boycott of particular corporations or individuals in an effort to intimidate or coerce them to break off their business relationships with Israel. “[Divestment](#)” refers to the withdrawal of any financial investments which have been made in Israel, or in companies that operate there. It is an attempt to economically strangle the Jewish state. “[Sanctions](#)” refers to an effort to convince governments globally to take punitive actions against Israel, specifically, such as with trade penalties and bans, and the severing of diplomatic ties.

BDS is the product of a decades-long global disinformation campaign to destroy Israel as a Jewish-nation state. Ironically, BDS [hurts Palestinians](#).

The area had been under British administration since the end of World War I. The 1947 UN partition plan called for the establishment of two states—one Jewish, one Arab—in the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River—the

area today comprising the State of Israel, Judea and Samaria (commonly known as the West Bank) and Gaza.



UN Partition Plan (1947).

The Jewish leadership (albeit reluctantly) accepted partition. In contrast, Arab leadership throughout the Arab world rejected partition, and seven Arab countries invaded on the very day Israel declared independence on May 15, 1948.

The BDS movement demands that the indigenous homeland of the Jews be free of all Jews, either by forced expulsion or genocide. BDS supporters use false and manipulative language such as “[settler colonialists](#)” and “occupiers” to describe Jewish inhabitants of Israel, and often use the slogan, “from the river to sea, Palestine will be free,” to refer to the [elimination of Israel](#) (i.e., to destroy it from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea).

Important Facts

FACT: Jews have been indigenous to the Land of Israel for over 3000 years. This land, (with its geographical heart in Judea and Samaria) is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish People. Despite numerous invasions, massacres. expulsions

and occupations (Assyrians in 722 BCE, Babylonians in 586 BCE, Persians in 539 BCE, Greeks in 331 BCE, Romans in 63 BCE, Muslims in 636 CE, Crusaders in 1099 CE, Ottoman Turks in 1516 CE and the British in 1917), the Jews have been the only people who have been there consistently. Jews were already an ancient people in the Land of Israel when Muslims invaded Jerusalem in 636 CE.



The Dead Sea scrolls, ancient Jewish and Hebrew texts, discovered in Judea. The scrolls include no Christian or Muslim texts.

The Jewish people endured ceaseless programs, including the [Farhud](#) even when there was no Jewish state, as well as anti Jewish massacres by local Arabs in the 1920s and 1930s. There was an increasing return by Jews to their homeland in the late 19th century through the 20th century, coupled with the Nazi European and North African Holocaust, which included the murders of six million Jews, resulting in the Jewish determination to return to their ancient homeland. However, the Arabs who considered themselves Syrians or Iraqis, and who did not consider themselves "Palestinians" (that descriptor applied to Jews) fought against the Jews in post-war Palestine.

The armies of five Arab countries (Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Trans Jordan-now known as Jordan) invaded Israel in 1948. Armed forces of the nascent state of Israel defeated these armies, and ended up with 50% more land, including West Jerusalem. Jordan conquered the Old City of Jerusalem, expelled its Jewish inhabitants, desecrated and destroyed many of its ancient Jewish shrines, for example, using Jewish tombstones for building latrines.

In 1967, with Egypt and Syria threatening annihilation and massing troops on its borders, Israel launched a defensive war conquering the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, Judea and Samaria from Jordan (who had occupied the area illegally since 1948), and the Golan Heights from Syria.

In 1982, Israel returned the Sinai as part of its peace agreement with Egypt. And in 1993, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) signed a peace agreement known as the Oslo Accords, which was to lead to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, and a historic settlement of the conflict.

However, this state never materialized; within weeks of Oslo's signing, Palestinian terrorist groups launched deadly attacks against Israelis, culminating in the Second Intifada in 2000 which featured almost daily suicide bombings of civilians in buses, restaurants, clubs, weddings, Bar Mitzvahs, and Seders, culminating in the death of more than 1,000 Jews and thousands more maimed.



The second Palestinian Intifada (terrorism) led to the deaths of over a thousand innocent Israeli women, children, and men on buses, restaurants, markets, and other places while going about their daily lives.

Currently, Israeli security personnel are located in part of the West Bank under the auspices of the Oslo accords.

FACT: Arabs in Israel have more individual rights than Arabs in any of its neighboring Muslim countries. Israeli Arabs have significantly more rights than they do in Palestinian controlled Gaza and the West Bank, which lack free elections,

freedom of the press, women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, freedom of religion, and more.

Israeli Arabs vote and run in all elections. They currently sit in the Knesset (Parliament), work in the government, and play an active role in the current government coalition. Arabs sit on the Supreme Court, work as full staff members of hospitals, work as lawyers and judges, serve in the military, pray in mosques, and attend all universities and professional schools in Israel.



[Israeli Arabs](#) against BDS.

Of note, a conservative Islamic Arab political party, Ra'am, has served in the Israeli government.

FACT: The Arab and Druze population has significantly increased since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. Historical and current data has shown that the claims of “ethnic cleansing” of Muslims in Israel are false. In fact, [ethnic cleansing](#) occurred in Muslim countries where 850,000 Jews—almost the entire Jewish population—were expelled following Israel’s establishment in 1948, forcing them to leave all their possessions behind.

FACT: Jews are racially diverse. “[Mizrahi](#)” Jews were expelled from Arab countries in 1948 and came from families who had settled in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria and Iraq before the 7th century and the rise of Islam—some as early as the 2nd century BCE. “Sephardic” Jews (who settled in Spain during its Muslim occupation) were persecuted and largely expelled from the Iberian peninsula in the

15th century. The majority of Jews in Israel are Mizrahi, but the gathering of the diasporas is a multicolor melting pot, including Jews from the African diaspora.



Jews were forced out of Arab and Muslim lands in 1948.

FACT: BDS is not new. Arab boycotts began in the 1920s, decades before the establishment of the Jewish State. The Arab League started [boycotting](#) Jewish products in pre-state Israel only five months after World War II ended in 1945—3 years before Israel’s founding.

FACT: BDS and other forms of antisemitism create psychological harm. While Jews account for less than 2% of the American population, Jewish people were the targets of [over 60%](#) of religious bias-related hate crimes in 2019. There has been a rapid rise in Jew hate on [college campuses](#), cloaked as Anti Zionism. The BDS movement and its followers have created a [hostile environment](#) for Jewish students, impinging on their rights to fully participate in campus life and [targeting pro-Israel students](#) for exclusion. There is a [direct relationship](#) between anti-Israel and [antisemitic activity](#) on campuses, with BDS threatening the civil rights and safety of Jewish students.



BDS protests turned violent, endangering Jewish students.

Attacks on [Jewish students](#) have reached over 1,000 in 2021 alone. These [attacks](#) have included historical antisemitic tropes directed at such youth (e.g. Jews control the banks and media and have single-handedly caused wars), bullying (e.g. harassment, violence, physical, emotional, and mental abuse), demonization of Israel, denigration, discrimination (loss of job opportunity, lowered grades in courses, humiliation in class), genocidal expression (denigration of Holocaust and Jews in general), denial of Jewish self-determination, and the destruction of Jewish property.

These attacks can have damaging psychological effects, including but not limited to the [jeopardization](#) of Jewish students' learning and development. Such effects can lead to post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, denial of identity, and other forms of negative self-esteem, which research has proven can result in a detrimental impact on mental health and emotional well-being.

Jewish students are excluded from various university or campus organized groups and events unless they [disavow](#) their identities. Jewish clubs and organizations have been denied the right to invite certain speakers who may be viewed as pro-Israel on campuses. This exclusion isolates and induces fear among students during critical times in their development, and ultimately affects their interpersonal relationships. [Sixty-nine percent](#) of Jewish college students say they always or sometimes avoid certain places, events, or situations at their school because they are concerned for their safety or comfort as Jews.

Jewish students are [more likely to experience hate crimes at colleges and universities](#) when compared to other minority student populations. Jewish students are being bullied on campus solely for their heritage, identity, and support of Israel

The [effects of bullying](#) have been well documented in the psychology literature and include:

- Withdrawal from family and school activities
- Physical ailments
- Panic Attacks
- Sleep disturbances and nightmares
- Learning and concentration difficulties

FACT: BDS negatively impacts scholarly collaborations and scientific advances. The BDS movement aims to end scholarly collaboration with Israeli Universities. This not only hurts Israeli-Jewish students, but many Israeli-Arab, Israeli-Druze, and Israeli-Christian students in Israel and worldwide. There are many examples of [Israel-U.S. university collaborations](#) and academic exchanges that have advanced science in numerous areas, including but not limited to psychology.



Israeli and North American scientists work together to beat cancer.

FACT: BDS violates the ethical codes established by major mental health organizations. BDS is a violation of both the **American Psychological Association's** (APA, 2017) [Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#) and the American Counseling Association's (2014) [Code of Ethics](#). APA affiliated

websites, divisions, and groups that support or endorse BDS are inconsistent with these values and serve to support hate.

BDS violates the following APA Principles and Ethical Standards:

Principles

- *Principle C: Integrity*
- *Principle D: Justice*
- *Principle E: Respect for People's Rights and Dignity*

Ethical Standards

- *2.01 Boundaries of Competence*
- *3.01 Unfair Discrimination*
- *3.03 Other Harassment*
- *3.04 Avoiding Harm*
- *3.09 Cooperation with Other Professionals*

BDS violates the following ACA Principles and Ethical Standards:

Principles

- *Nonmaleficence*
- *Justice*
- *Veracity*

Ethical Standards

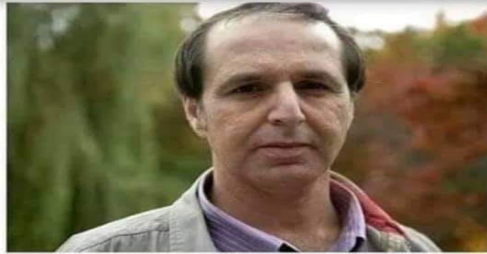
- *A.4 Avoiding Harm and Imposing Values*
- *C.2.a Boundaries of Competence*
- *F.7.b. Counselor Educator Competence*

If major mental health associations are committed to the principles of integrity and justice, practicing within the bounds of their knowledge and competence, and avoiding harm and discrimination, they will disavow BDS and all forms of antisemitism.

FACT: BDS supporters use [social psychological manipulations](#), disinformation, and propaganda to spread falsehoods and disinformation.

BDS campaigns attack Israel and the Jewish people on the question of the Holocaust, religion, ethnicity, and indigeneity. Tactics include depicting Israel as genocidal and a usurper of other's land. BDS supporters portray themselves and the BDS movement as progressive and as being committed to social justice; when in fact, BDS is an antisemitic movement aimed at marginalizing, delegitimizing, and isolating Jewish people and the State of Israel.

FACT: Individuals and organizations truly committed to social justice understand that Israel is a thriving, pluralistic democracy. The [U.S. Equal Opportunity Committee](#) and many university presidents have released Anti-BDS statements. Moreover, Governors of all 50 U.S. states and the mayor of D.C. have [condemned](#) BDS. We urge you to do the same.



"If BDS supporters really care about Palestinians, why don't they go to the Gaza Strip and try to promote the rights of women living under Hamas rule? Why don't they come to the Palestinian territories and try to promote reforms, democracy and freedom of speech under the PA and Hamas? At the end of the day, BDS seems to be more about hating Israel than helping the Palestinians.."

- Khaled Abu Toameh,
Award-winning Arab Israeli journalist

Say **NO** to **BDS**