

Public Debate

Israel: Is Boycott the Answer?



**Venue: Ballroom, Gresham Hotel
Tuesday 18 May, 7.00pm**

SPEAKERS:

**Billy Timmins, TD Fine Gael;
Joe Costello, TD Labour Party;
Senator Mark Dearey, Green Party;
Cllr. Richard Boyd Barrett, Chair IAWM;
Mags O'Brien, Chair Trade Union Friends of Palestine**

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ISRAEL – IS BOYCOTT THE ANSWER?

Across the world there is a growing movement calling for an international boycott and sanctions to be imposed against the State of Israel because of its treatment of the Palestinians.

For decades Israel has illegally occupied Palestinian territory and denied Palestinians the most basic human rights or self-determination.

The Israeli assault on Gaza at the beginning of 2009, which claimed the lives of almost 1,400 Palestinians, including over 300 children, horrified people across the globe.

The continuing Israeli siege of Gaza, where over 1 million Palestinians are imprisoned in the most densely populated territory in the world and vital humanitarian supplies are systematically blocked by Israel, is causing an ever worsening humanitarian disaster. The situation has become so desperate that on 5 May 2010 the Director of Operations of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees, called upon the international community to break the siege on the Gaza Strip by sending ships loaded with desperately needed supplies.

Across the Palestinian territories, Israel continues to systematically kill, detain and expel Palestinian civilians with impunity - daily expanding the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands. Women continue to give birth stranded at checkpoints, prisoners continue to be tortured, adults and children alike continue to be killed. Those not expelled, imprisoned or killed live under a system of overt apartheid, discrimination and constant threat.

Few now dispute that Israel has oppressed the Palestinian people in many ways for decades.

Yet, despite widespread condemnation of Israel's policies by the UN and various international conventions, the international community of nations has failed to bring about Israel's compliance with international law or a respect for basic human rights.

Against this background calls have grown louder for decisive action against Israel in the form of an international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions - similar to that applied to Apartheid South Africa in the past.

However, there is disagreement on whether such a campaign is justified or would be effective in bringing a just solution to Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Irish Anti-War Movement has organised a public debate to provide a forum for political and civil society groups here in Ireland to discuss the arguments for and against imposing a boycott and sanctions on Israel, if we are to help achieve justice for the Palestinians and peace in the region.

The debate will take place on Tuesday May 18th in the Ballroom of the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell St in Dublin. Speakers will include: Joe Costello TD (Labour), Senator Mark Dearey (Greens), Billy Timmins TD (Fine Gael), Richard Boyd Barrett (Irish Anti-War Movement).

Come along to participate in this important debate.

For further information contact:

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