

Declaration of Support for the Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions

Declaration of Support for the Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions by the Council of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association

December 15, 2013

The council of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) declares its support for the boycott of Israeli academic institutions.

A broad coalition of Palestinian non-governmental organizations, acting in concert to represent the Palestinian people, formed the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel. Their call was taken up in the United States by the US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel. A NAISA member-initiated petition brought this issue to NAISA Council. After extensive deliberation on the merits of the petition, the NAISA Council decided by unanimous vote to encourage members of NAISA and all who support its mission to honor the boycott.

NAISA is dedicated to free academic inquiry about, with, and by Indigenous communities. The NAISA Council protests the infringement of the academic freedom of Indigenous Palestinian academics and intellectuals in the Occupied Territories and Israel who are denied fundamental freedoms of movement, expression, and assembly, which we uphold.

As the elected council of an international community of Indigenous and allied non-Indigenous scholars, students, and public intellectuals who have studied and resisted the colonization and domination of Indigenous lands via settler state structures throughout the world, we strongly protest the illegal occupation of Palestinian lands and the legal structures of the Israeli state that systematically discriminate against Palestinians and other Indigenous peoples.

NAISA is committed to the robust intellectual and ethical engagement of difficult and often highly charged issues of land, identity, and belonging. Our members will have varying opinions on the issue of the boycott, and we encourage generous dialogue that affirms respectful disagreement as a vital scholarly principle. We reject shaming or personal attacks as counter to humane understanding and the greater goals of justice, peace, and decolonization.

As scholars dedicated to the rights of Indigenous peoples, we affirm that our efforts are directed specifically at the Israeli state, not at Israeli individuals. The NAISA Council encourages NAISA members to boycott Israeli academic institutions because they are

imbricated with the Israeli state and we wish to place pressure on that state to change its policies. We champion and defend intellectual and academic freedom, and we recognize that conversation and collaboration with individuals and organizations in Israel/Palestine can make an important contribution to the cause of justice. In recognition of the profound social and political obstacles facing Palestinians in such dialogues, however, we urge our members and supporters to engage in such actions outside the aegis of Israeli educational institutions, honoring this boycott until such time as the rights of the Palestinian people are respected and discriminatory policies are ended.

NAISA Council Members who wrote the Declaration of Support for the Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions

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