



- Press Release -

Israeli Anthropological Association – Resolution

**End the Occupation, Oppose Academic Boycott, Support Dialogue**

Ashkelon, Israel: On Thursday, June 11 2015, the Israeli Anthropological Association's Business meeting passed a resolution calling for the end of the occupation, opposing academic boycott and supporting dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians.

The Israeli Anthropological Association (IAA) is the professional organization of anthropologists in Israel and currently has 102 members. The IAA's business meeting took place in Ashkelon as part of the Association's annual meeting. The resolution was debated at length, and the vote count (by ballot slips) indicated 74% support for the resolution, 16% against, 10% abstain. Earlier in the conference, a plenary session was held to discuss possible responses to the continuing violation of Palestinians' human rights as well as the calls for an academic boycott of Israel.

In 2014, a petition calling anthropologists to support the boycott of Israeli academia was circulated, which as of now (June 2015) has over 1300 signatories. In December 2014, during the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) annual meeting in Washington DC, discussions of a boycott of Israeli academic institutions gained momentum. In May 2015, the AAA sent an official task force to Israel and the West Bank to evaluate the state of affairs in the region and to help form the Association's position on matters related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While a putative academic boycott does not explicitly feature in the task force's terms of references, it featured centrally in meetings and discussions the task force held. It is expected that at the upcoming AAA annual meeting, which will take place in Denver in November 2015, a motion supporting the boycott of Israeli universities will be presented to the business meeting.

The IAA resolution (attached) contains three related parts. The first part calls on the Israeli government to end the siege of Gaza and assist in its reconstruction, end the occupation and promote a just settlement of the conflict, afford full equality to Palestinian citizens of Israel and advance a range of dignified and workable solutions for Palestinian refugees. The second part calls on anthropologists abroad to recognize the important role that academics play in the difficult struggle for peace in the region, to resist conflating academic institutions with government policies

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and to reject the call to boycott Israeli universities. The third part is a call on anthropologists to support research and teaching in and of the region, strengthen academic and political dialogue, contribute to efforts designed to end the occupation, and assist in nudging reluctant leaders towards peace and justice.

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## IAA Resolution, June 11 2015

### End the Occupation, Oppose Academic Boycott, Support Dialogue

1. Upholding human rights, the quest for justice and a hope for a viable future for Israelis, Palestinians, and the Middle East at large, the IAA calls upon the Israeli government to follow UN resolutions and adhere to the initiative of many in the international community by:
  - A. ending the siege of Gaza and cooperating with the Palestinian leadership, Egypt and the international community in a genuine effort to reconstruct the Gaza strip after the damages inflicted on it in 2014, while safeguarding security for Israelis;
  - B. negotiating in good faith with the Palestinians towards a just and final settlement of the conflict based on Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967;
  - C. recognizing the rights of Palestinian and Bedouin Citizens of Israel to full equality, and doing everything necessary to fulfill this right;
  - D. promoting and implementing a spectrum of dignified, just and effective solutions to the tragedy of Palestinian refugees.
2. Recognizing the important role that moderate segments in Israeli society, including academics, have played over the years in the difficult struggle for peace in the region, the IAA calls on anthropologists and academics abroad to resist conflating academic institutions with government policies and actions, and to oppose initiatives to boycott universities in Israel. Associating academic institutions with the political regimes they operate in flies in the face of anthropology's most enduring contribution to intellectual and political sensibilities: its ability to recognize and articulate nuance, deal with social and cultural complexity and avoid essentialization.
3. The IAA urges colleagues abroad to strengthen anthropological research, debate, and teaching in the region; to mobilize anthropological insight and moral integrity for renewed dialogue between willing parties on either side; to help terminate the occupation and to nudge reluctant leaders towards peace.