

Palestine: BDS and the Peace Industry: Mutually Exclusive Paths

Friday 12 February 2010, by [WARSCHAWSKI Michael](#) (Date first published: 23 November 2009).

United in Struggle Against Israeli Colonialism, Occupation and Racism Seminar.

On 24-26 October 2009, the third international seminar initiated by the Alternative Information Center took place, this year in partnership with the Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI). Palestinian, Israeli and international activists—women and men—took an active part in this three day event. The presentations and primarily the discussions amongst the participants were for the most part interesting and directed toward strengthening the triangle composed of the Palestinian national movement, the international solidarity movement and the anti-colonial forces in Israel. As summarized by one of the moderators, it was a seminar of activists and action. The success of the seminar obligates the participants to preserve the dynamics that characterized it and to strengthen joint activism for promoting the rights of the Arab Palestinian people. Practical steps are being taken to ensure that this does indeed occur.

In parallel, Palestinian, Israeli and international organizations are organizing for another type of conference scheduled to take place in Madrid next spring, under the patronage of Javier Solana and Miguel Angel Moratinos, the goal of which is to promote the participation of civil society in the Middle East peace process. Several organizations are interested in taking part in both initiatives, some out of innocence and others out of the desire to simultaneously enjoy the forbidden fruits of this world and the promises of the next. This is by definition impossible, as both initiatives express two contradictory paths—the path of the uncompromising struggle for rights on the one hand, and what is dubbed the “peace channel” on the other.

As highlighted by the United in Struggle seminar, the path of struggle is today focused on the international campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) on Israel, a campaign that received a big push this year and which provides an opportunity to the international solidarity movement to combine protesting the occupation and colonization with a stage of attack, in which Israel is required to pay a price for its systematic violations of international law. The “peace channel,” on the other hand, is directed entirely at providing legitimacy to Israel and bending the Palestinian people so they accept Israeli conditions. One of the goals of the Moratinos-Solana gang is to destroy the BDS movement, which has already begun to bear fruit on both the levels of civil society and the international community.

A watershed passes through these two channels, that of BDS and that of the peace industry, and each organization claiming to struggle for the rights of the Palestinian people and to implement international law must decide between them. Those organizations which take part in the initiatives of Moratinos and partners and think they can keep their hands clean with slogans about one state are fooling themselves.

It is not by chance that the BDS movement does not take a position about the desired solution to the conflict in Palestine, and allows each one to promote her own solution. This is a question of rights,

not solutions.

A last comment to those organizations who in the past took part in the “peace channel” of the international community, including the now infamous Madrid Conference for a Just Peace, in 2007. This time you know what you are getting into and you consciously chose to be part of the camp in which you are positioned. This is your right, just as it is our right to request that you stay away from the camp of those who are struggling—Palestinians, internationals and Israelis—for the rights of the Palestinian people, including the right not to accept the dictates of the international community.

P.S.

* * From the Social Movements’ International Newsletter n° 1, January 2010. Originally published in English:

http://www.alternativenews.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=143&Itemid=398&limitstart=5