

# Norway Divests from Leviev Companies Due to Israeli Settlement Construction

Tuesday 24 August 2010, by [Correspondent\(s\)](#) (Date first published: 23 August 2010).

August 23, New York, NY - In a major victory for the international movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel, the Norwegian government announced today that it has divested from Lev Leviev's company Africa Israel Investments and its construction subsidiary Danya Cebus due to their construction of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The move followed a campaign of more than a year by affected Palestinian villages of Bil'in and Jayyous and by Norwegian, Palestinian, Israeli, and international activist groups, including Adalah-NY, calling on the Norwegian government to divest from Africa Israel.

The companies of Israeli billionaire Lev Leviev have been the target of a boycott campaign that led UNICEF and Oxfam to renounce donations from Leviev, the British government to sever business ties with Leviev, celebrities to seek distance from him, and divestment by other major investment firms .

Mohammed Khatib representing the West Bank village of Bil'in's Popular Committee Against the Wall and Settlements commented, "We've achieved another major victory in our struggle of protests and boycotts against Israeli apartheid. On April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 we wrote the government of Norway calling for them to divest from Africa Israel because it is one company that built the settlement of Mattityahu East on Bil'in's land, and they responded that they were investigating. It is victories like this that demonstrate our commitment to continue our struggle for justice, despite Israel's efforts to crush it through a campaign of arrests and intimidation, targeting activists like Abdallah Abu Rahmah from Bil'in who will be sentenced tomorrow for being an organizer." Palestinian protest and boycott organizers like Abu Rahmah, Khatib, Mohammad Othman from Jayyous and Jamal Juma' have all been arrested recently by Israel for their nonviolent activities, and Israel's Knesset is reviewing a bill to criminalize pro-boycott activities by Israeli citizens.

In addition to divesting from Africa Israel Investments and Danya Cebus, the Norwegian Government announced divestment from the Malaysian Company Samling Global over its forestry operations. The Norwegian government had previously divested from the Israeli company Elbit Systems , due to its role in building Israel's wall in the Occupied West Bank in violation of international law. The Norwegian government is maintaining its holdings in another Africa Israel subsidiary, Africa Israel Properties, saying it is not directly involved in settlement construction.

Riham Barghouti from Adalah-NY explained, "I met with a senior advisor from Norway's Council on Ethics at their Oslo offices in May, 2010 to encourage them to divest from Africa Israel. So I'm glad to see that the Norwegian government has upheld its commitment to international law, and we encourage them to continue reviewing and divesting from other companies in their portfolio that are complicit in Israeli apartheid, including Africa Israel Properties."

Jamal Juma, the Coordinator of the Stop the Wall Campaign and a member of the Palestinian Boycott National Committee, noted, "We appreciate the Norwegian Finance Ministry's commitment to upholding international law through continuing to divest from companies profiting from Israel's oppression of the Palestinian people. It is a significant milestone in the Palestinian-led BDS movement aimed at holding Israel accountable for its violations of international and humanitarian law. We hope that the Norwegian Pension fund will fully divest from Israeli crimes through severing links with all Israeli companies and international companies complicit with Israeli violations of international law, and hope that other governments follow the lead of Norway until Israel ends its oppression and occupation of the Palestinian people."

On April 21, 2009, Bil'in's Popular Committee Against the Wall and Settlements sent a letter to Norway's Council on Ethics calling for Norway to divest from Africa Israel. The West Bank village of Jayyous where a different Leviev company, Leader Management and Development, is building the Zufim settlement, followed with a May 4<sup>th</sup> letter calling on Norway to divest. On May 11, 2009, eleven organizations from Norway, Europe, Palestine, Israel and the US sent a letter to Norway's Council on Ethics supporting the letters from Bil'in and Jayyous.

Sharif Omar of Jayyous' Land Defence Committee added, "We welcome this decision by the Norwegian government to divest from some of Leviev's companies. But another Leviev company, Leader Management and Development, continues today to build settlements on Jayyous' land. We call for additional international action to pressure these companies and the Israeli government to end construction and return our stolen farmland."

---

**P.S.**

\* Media Contact: [info@adalahny.org](mailto:info@adalahny.org)