

PRESS RELEASE 6th November 2013 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**EMINENT ACADEMICS DEMAND NO EU SELL-OUT ON
SETTLEMENT FUNDING BAN**

Academics across Europe express outrage at rumoured EU cave-in
to Israeli and US pressure

Prominent professors, including five Fellows of the Royal Society as well as a member of the French Académie des Sciences, have yesterday written to the EU's head of Foreign Policy expressing their dismay at reports that the EU is watering down its guidelines on Israeli eligibility for EU funding to the point where they would become meaningless.

The letter says, "We have been particularly disturbed to read in Israeli media that one of these changes removes the obligation of Israeli grant applicants to make a formal declaration that the activities for which they seek funds will not take place, in whole or in part, in the Occupied Territories; this leaves it up to the EU to try to identify breaches. Another change means that any European funds recipient needs only to have its HQ registered at an Israeli postcode to be eligible, even if the bulk of its activities are in the Occupied Territories."

The letter concludes by urging Baroness Ashton "to maintain the integrity of the Guidelines, as the first modest step in demonstrating to the Israeli government that their actions have consequences." It is signed by 28 leading academics from 6 EU countries.

This follows an earlier approach to Baroness Ashton on 12th September this year, when some 800 academics signed a letter from the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine (BRICUP) and the Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP) on the eve of negotiations between the EU and Israel on new EU Guidelines concerning the eligibility for funding of Israeli entities that may be operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. It urged Lady Ashton not to abandon or weaken the principles embodied in the guidelines.

The intention of the guidelines is to ensure that the EU's own institutions respect the obligation not to recognize Israeli sovereignty in the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, including the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip as well as the Syrian Golan Heights.

Michael Deas, Coordinator in Europe for the Palestinian Boycott National Committee (BNC), said that the Guidelines issued in July:

“...show that grassroots civil society pressure is forcing the European Union to acknowledge its legal responsibility to not recognize Israel’s regime of occupation, colonization and apartheid against the Palestinian people and to end some aspects of its deep complicity in maintaining this illegal and criminal system.”

Despite the clear support among European academics for the EU guidelines, press reports in Israel and elsewhere in the last few days indicate that the EU is on the point of conceding to Israel’s major demands. In particular, Israeli organisations will not after all be required to sign a declaration which endorses the internationally recognised significance of the Green Line; and to be eligible to apply for EU funding, Israeli organisations operating in the Occupied Territories need only maintain a ‘headquarters’ with an Israeli post code address.

Prof. Ivar Ekeland of AURDIP said, "This would let companies like Ahava off the hook completely. Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories are based in an illegal West Bank settlement and yet they have participated in and even co-ordinated a number of EU-funded projects worth millions of Euros. Since they have their HQ in Israel, they would still be allowed to continue such activities under this weakening of the guidelines."

Professor Jonathan Rosenhead of BRICUP said, "We are endeavouring to demonstrate to the EU the strength of feeling against such a capitulation to Israeli pressure. As part of our campaign we asked a very select group of European researchers of the highest national and international standing to sign the letter to Lady Ashton. The response has been most impressive."

Signatories include Étienne Balibar, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University Paris-Ouest (Nanterre); Sir Patrick Bateson FRS, Emeritus Professor of Ethology at Cambridge; Maria Esteban, mathematician of Université Paris-Dauphine; Tom Kibble FRS, physicist of Imperial College London; Jean-Marc Lévy-Leblond, Emeritus Professor of Physics at the University of Nice, philosopher Dr. Mary Midgley; Jacques Rancière, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris VIII-Saint-Denis; Professor Graeme Segal FRS of Oxford University, and Walter Schachermayer, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Vienna,

[ends]

Notes for editors

1. The full text of the letter to Catherine Ashton, along with the full list of signatories, is attached.

2. The current text of the EU Guidelines can be found here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2013:205:0009:0011:EN:PDF>

3. The BNC analysis of what the guidelines do (and don't) cover is here:
<http://www.bdsmovement.net/2013/eu-guidelines-press-release-11211>. I

And there is further comment from the BNC here:

<http://www.bdsmovement.net/2013/eu-guidelines-press-release-11211#sthash.24qHVQct.dpuf>

4. Ahava Dead Sea Laboratories Ltd, whose factory is located in the illegal Mitzpe Shalem settlement in the occupied West Bank, has participated in five projects under the current Framework Programme 7 (FP7), and is even the co-ordinator of two of them. These projects have a total value of €36,033,269, of which the EU has contributed €25,245,718.

Projects under FP7 involving Ahava (data from the CORDIS database);

SUPERFLEX (Co-Ordinator: AHAVA DEAD SEA LABORATORIES LTD)

Total cost: EUR 9 386 165

EU contribution: EUR 6 200 000

SKIN TREAT (Co-Ordinator: AHAVA DEAD SEA LABORATORIES LTD)

Total cost: EUR 5 446 376

EU contribution: EUR 3 950 035

SMART-NANO

Total cost: EUR 4 458 267

EU contribution: EUR 3 495 300

NANOTHER

Total cost: EUR 11 556 307

EU contribution: EUR 8 408 483

NANORETOX

Total cost: EUR 5 186 154

EU contribution: EUR 3 191 900