



divestment proposal
Josh Fogel to: jhorwood

02/16/2017 05:40 PM

Dear Ms. Horwood,

I have just taken a close look at the YUdivest proposal. I will be brief. When this was brought up before YUFA last year, I believe, much attention was focused on the fact that the organization behind it was centrally really aiming at getting the University to boycott Israel. When I (and many others) tried to corroborate this, we went to its website which had conveniently just closed down, but it was clear that it a sham operation. The present proposal is much more thorough and detailed, though I would caution that just having a lot of footnotes is not the same as making a strong case. My feeling is that it is mixing apples and oranges and much else. Israel is mentioned 22 times--more than Syria or Iraq (Iran only gets a single cameo), though fewer than Saudi Arabia. I have nothing against a call to divest from munitions makers, but I do think there is a BIG difference between a regime that slaughters its own people (Syria) and one that fights back in self-defense like Israel. On occasion, Israel has indeed perhaps exceeded ideal response levels, but every single instance named in the YUdivest proposal in which Israel is named was in response to Palestinian provocation. This is definitely not the place to fight the Middle East's most contentious conflict, and I do not wish for York to have its name associated with an out-and-out anti-Semitic movement like BDS.

Sincerely,

Joshua A. Fogel
Canada Research Chair
History Department