

Dear

I wanted to alert you to activities in the American Studies Association that people at UCSD might be interested in.

One year ago the ASA Executive Committee was asked to consider a resolution from a caucus within the Association calling it to honor the call from Palestinian civil society to support the academic boycott of Israel. The EC then forwarded the resolution to the National Council and following a lengthy period of careful deliberation, the Council voted to put a revised resolution to a vote among its members. The voting recently concluded and the resolution passed. Follow this link for more information: <http://www.theasa.net>

The resolution understands boycott as limited to a refusal on the part of the ASA in its official capacities to enter into formal collaborations with Israeli academic institutions, or with scholars who are expressly serving as representatives or ambassadors of those institutions (such as deans, rectors, presidents and others), or on behalf of the Israeli government, until Israel ceases to violate human rights and international law.

The proposed resolution expressly DOES NOT endorse a boycott of Israeli scholars engaged in individual-level contacts and ordinary forms of academic exchange, including presentations at conferences, public lectures at campuses, and collaboration on research and publication. U.S. scholars are not discouraged under the terms of the boycott from traveling to Israel for academic purposes, provided they are not engaged in a formal partnership with or sponsorship by Israeli academic institutions. The academic boycott of Israeli institutions is not designed to curtail dialogue. Rather, it emerges from the recognition that these forms of ordinary academic exchange are often impossible for Palestinian academics due to Israeli policies.

The ASA recognizes the rights of its members to disagree with the resolution and that individual members will act according to their conscience and convictions on these complex issues. As an association that upholds the principle of academic freedom, the ASA exercises no legislative authority over its members. By contrast, it is a civil offense for scholars within Israel to endorse this boycott.

I wanted to let you know about this in case you were interested and in case you receive any questions about the ASA. And while I know this is a difficult issue for many, I hope you will join us in affirming the right of scholars and students at our university and elsewhere to take ethical stands on important public issues.

Sincerely,