



**PALESTINE
SOLIDARITY
CAMPAIGN**

www.palestinecampaign.org

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Dear Cllr Councillor

On Wednesday 29th April the Supreme Court deemed government guidance, issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in September 2016, that interfered with the ability of pension administrators to take [decisions based on ethical, social and moral considerations unlawful](#). In its ruling the Supreme Court upheld the right of administering authorities to take pension holders' ethical and moral concerns into account when devising an investment strategy. This includes taking into account growing concerns around investments in companies complicit in Israeli violations of international law and Palestinian human rights.

As the largest organisation in the UK campaigning for freedom, justice and equality for Palestinians, we believe that is imperative scheme administrators ensure that the deferred wages of LGPS members are not invested in companies complicit in Israel's human rights abuses.

Israel is engaged in grave violations of Palestinian human rights and international law. This includes the illegal military occupation and settlement of Palestinian land in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as affirmed by the [UN Security Council](#), and the [UK government](#). The inhumane land, sea and air blockade on Gaza, deemed a [fragrant violation of international human rights and humanitarian law by UN experts](#). As well as the denial of the fundamental human right of dispossessed Palestinian refugees to return to the land from which they, or their family members, were expelled, [in violation of UN Resolution 194](#).

Israel can only maintain its grave violations of Palestinian human rights because of products, equipment and services it receives from a range of complicit companies. These companies are complicit through:

- 1) Supplying the Israeli military with weapons and other technology used to oppress Palestinians.
- 2) Providing technology and equipment used to maintain Israel's infrastructure of military occupation, such as its checkpoints and the apartheid wall.
- 3) Investment and other activity in Israel's illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, based on stolen Palestinian land.

As a chair of an administering authorities pension committee, we ask you, as a matter of urgency, to act to ensure adequate screening and due diligence procedures are in place to guarantee the scheme is not complicit in Israel's violations of international law.

Failure to do so could be of financial detriment to the scheme. As the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's guidance on overseas business risk states, there are "clear risks related to economic and financial activities in the settlements, and we do not encourage or offer support to such activity."

We therefore ask you to:

- 1) Reassure pension holders concerns by publicly outlining what procedures are in place to ensure the scheme is not complicit in Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and international law. This includes outlining robust time-limited engagement practises where complicit companies are



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identified, and what subsequent action can be taken if companies do not respond to engagement processes.

- 2) Continue to engage with scheme members', their trade unions and Palestine Solidarity Campaign to ensure members concerns around the investment of their money in companies violating Palestinian human rights are recognised and acted upon as a matter of urgency.

If you require more information on about companies complicit in Israeli violations of international law, please contact info@palestinecampaign.org.

Yours Sincerely,

Ben Jamal
Director | Palestine Solidarity Campaign