

*Canadians for Justice and Peace
in the Middle East*
9880 Rue Clark, Suite 225,
Montreal, QC H3L 2R3
438-380-5410

August 4th, 2011

Stephen G. Wetmore
President and CEO, Canadian Tire Corporation,
Limited
2180 Yonge Street
P.O. Box 770, Station K
Toronto, ON M4P 2V8

Dear Mr. Wetmore,

I am writing to ask you to cease selling Israeli brands (such as Keter – Black&Decker), and to end your business partnership with Keter Plastic Israel. I am urging this action on your part, because it is the appropriate legal and ethical position for your company.

I am urging this change of Canadian Tire company policy for the following reasons:

- Palestinian civil society has called for the international community to boycott Israeli products until Israel complies with international law and universal principles of human rights vis-a-vis the Palestinians and their territory. The Palestinian call also asks for a boycott of any business or institution participating directly or indirectly in the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territories.
- The UN Human Rights Norms for Business, unanimously adopted in 2003, prohibits transnational corporations and other business entities from profiting from violations of international humanitarian law (Art. 3), and requires business to be conducted according to international law in the countries in which they operate (Art. 10). Canadian Tire violates these Norms by selling products from the Israeli company Keter Plastic that are manufactured in the illegal colonies of Barkan and Oranit in the occupied West Bank.
- By selling Israeli products, Canadian Tire is sending a signal to the Israeli government that apartheid and other war crimes it perpetrates are acceptable. The Norms stipulate that corporations must refrain from any activity which supports, solicits, or encourages states or any other entities to abuse human rights (Art. 11). Accordingly, Canadian Tire should not invest in, nor profit from, a state that systematically violates the rights of Arab citizens of Israel, and Palestinians residing in the occupied territories.

The organization I represent, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), is an organization whose mission is to empower Canadians to promote justice, development and peace in the Middle East. In the coming months and years, we will be promoting a large and growing campaign to get Canadian citizens and organs of civil society to boycott and divest from Israel. As a grassroots, secular, non-partisan volunteer organization, our policies are founded in 1) respect for international law, 2) a belief in a single standard for all, and 3) the position that violence is not a solution. We have 27,000 adherents across Canada, and active groups in numerous major Canadian cities. Our Website is www.cjpme.org.

The fundamentals of the situation in Israel-Palestine are simple. The UN Partition Plan of 1947 dictated that two states be created in Palestine: an Israeli one, and a Palestinian one. In 1948, the Israeli state was created, but the Palestinian one was not. In 1967, Israel took control of all the land that was to become a Palestinian state (including East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip), and continues to effectively control these territories, denying Palestinians their right to self-determination, as well as dozens of civil, human and humanitarian rights. This occupation is recognized as a hostile military occupation – as reflected by the unanimous vote of the Signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention of Dec. 5, 2001.

The call for a boycott of Israel on the part of the Palestinians because of rights abuses is not a frivolous one. The UN General Assembly votes yearly and decisively on the rights violations of the Palestinians by the Israelis. For illustration, I provide three examples below:

- Resolution 63/98 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, **passed by a vote of 165-to-8**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 156-to-7. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 157-to-9.
- Resolution 63/97 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, **passed by a vote of 171-to-6**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 165-to-7. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 162-to-8.
- Resolution 63/97 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Territory, including Jerusalem, and other occupied Arab territories, **passed by a vote of 173-to-6**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 169-to-6. A parallel resolution in 2006 passed by a vote of 165-to-7.

While the UN General Assembly votes decisively on these issues each year, action from the UN is stymied each year because the UN Security Council – the enforcement arm of the UN – refuses to intervene. This inaction is due to the political relationship between the United States and Israel: the United States typically vetoes Security Council resolutions which would put pressure on Israel to respect the norms of international law.

Canadian Tire strives to be a good corporation citizen by making a commitment to “Supplier Code of Business Conduct.” The company website states that “Our suppliers are expected to meet all legal requirements in the country of manufacture, including laws governing wages and benefits, health and safety, and the “lawful right of free association.” In light of these laudable commitments, I would like to draw your attention briefly to the conditions that face workers in the occupied Palestinian territories. The average wage per day for a Palestinian worker ranges from 13 to 20 dollars, whereas an Israeli worker earns 40 dollars a day. Also, only 15% of the businesses in the colonies observe occupational health and safety regulations. The Barkan Industrial Zone is also widely considered a “chemical bomb.” In fact, 97% of workers work in unhealthy conditions due to a lack of regulation and 59% of them are facing extremely dangerous conditions due to lack of appropriate equipment. Each year factories discharge over 810,000 cubic meters of polluted water into waterways and water tables, and onto Palestinian lands.

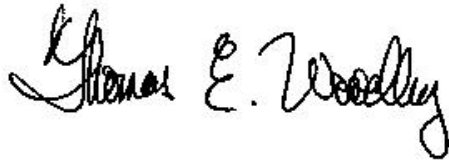
For the reasons provided above, my organization is preparing to launch a boycott campaign focusing on Canadian Tire. I urge you to cease operations in Israel and with Israeli business partners, so that my organization and its adherents are not forced to follow this course of action. The action against Apartheid South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s did not begin with states, but

with an outcry and action from civil society, and with the most ethical businesses being the first to participate in the boycott. May Canadian Tire affirm its ethical commitment to all workers by being one of the leaders in the current boycott campaign.

Should you have questions about the justification for my organization's campaign, or about specifics of the Israel-Palestine conflict, I would be happy to provide you any information you may desire.

I look forward to your favourable response and to encouraging our adherents to do business with Canadian Tire as an ethical place of business once it has ceased operations in Israel.

Sincerely,



Thomas E. Woodley
President, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East