

*Canadians for Justice and Peace in  
the Middle East*  
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November 3rd, 2010

Hennes & Mauritz Inc.( H&M)  
1 Dundas Street West  
18th floor, Suite 1808, box 47  
Toronto, ON, M5G 1Z3

Dear H&M executives,

I am writing to ask H&M to close its stores in Israel and to refrain from opening new ones until Israel puts an end to its illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories. I am urging this action on your part because it is the appropriate legal and ethical position for your company.

My organization, Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is considering the imminent launch of a boycott of H&M. The boycott of H&M is justified for the following reasons:

- By deciding to open up stores in Israel, H&M is signalling to the Israeli government and to the rest of the world that it not only tolerates the war crimes committed by the Israeli Occupation Forces, but also supports it. As stated in the UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Business Enterprises with Regards to Human Rights, unanimously adopted in 2003, “Transnational corporations and other business enterprises shall refrain from any activity which supports, solicits, or encourages States or any other entities to abuse human rights”.
- H&M’s goal to become a key player in Israel’s fashion industry goes against the company’s Social Responsibility Policy, which specifically states that H&M’s standards are based on international laws such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- H&M opened its stores in Israel at the same time as the release of the Goldstone Report. The Goldstone Report, which was commissioned by the UN in 2009 to investigate Israel’s Operation Cast Lead (OCL), concluded that Israel had repeatedly violated international law throughout its assault on Gaza and that OCL was illegal.
- The H&M store in the Malcha shopping centre in Jerusalem is located in a city gradually emptied of its Palestinian population for the construction of colonies reserved exclusively for Israeli Jewish residents.

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](http://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:

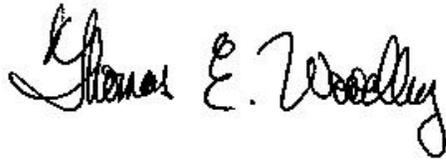
- Resolution 63/98 (adopted Dec. 18, 2008), Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, **passed by a vote of 165-to-8**. A parallel resolution in 2007 passed by a vote of 156-to-7. A parallel resolution in 2006 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.

For the reasons provided above, my organization is preparing to launch a boycott campaign focusing on H&M. I urge you to withdraw from the Israeli market, such 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 H&M and its primary benefactors be leaders in the Canadian struggle to remove any association with Israeli institutions which violate the rights of Palestinians, and further Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

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 H&M as an ethical place of business once it has stopped investing in Israel.



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