What is Moroccan Oil?

Moroccan oil is an Israeli beauty products company that sells hair and skin products. Founded by Israeli businesswoman Carmen Tal, Moroccan Oil has become a popular product line in the cosmetics industry. Their products are currently sold in hair salons all over Europe and North America, and have attracted some big name stylists, actresses and fashion designers as customers. Currently, the Moroccan Oil headquarters are located in Montreal, Quebec, and the company says that its products are made both in Canada and Israel.

Why Boycott Moroccan Oil?

Moroccan Oil first came to the attention of CJPME when members noticed that a number of Moroccan Oil products bore the “Made in Israel” identifier. CJPME investigated the Moroccan Oil brand, and visited numerous hair salons to see Moroccan Oil products, confirming that at least some of Moroccan Oil’s products are made in Israel.

Moroccan Oil is not forthcoming on the origins of its products. Naturally, with a name like “Moroccan Oil,” most customers assume there is a link to Morocco, yet there is no apparent business or manufacturing link to Morocco, and the company’s Website makes no claim that its products come from Morocco. While the company has started labeling some of its products as “Made in Canada,” the company provides no details about the location of manufacturing facilities in Canada. The only manufacturing facilities publicly identified with the company are located in Israel-Palestine, near Tel Aviv.

In August, 2011, as part of its research, CJPME contacted Moroccan Oil to find out more about the company. In telephone messages left with the receptionist, and in emails sent to company representatives, CJPME sought information on a number of topics: a list of the products made in Israel; the location of manufacturing facilities, whether in Israel-Palestine or Canada; the public/private nature of the company. CJPME’s inquiries were never returned, and CJPME has not found alternative means to better understand Moroccan Oil’s links with Israel, or its manufacturing facilities in Canada. In light of Moroccan Oil’s links to Israel, and its unwillingness to disclose its corporate practices, CJPME recommends the boycott of Moroccan Oil products.

CJPME’s recommendation to boycott Moroccan Oil comes in response to the July, 2005, call for an international boycott by 170 Palestinian civil society organizations. This call to boycott Israeli products sought to promote recognition of the Palestinians’ human rights, including the right to self-determination. The Palestinian boycott call includes any business or institution participating directly or indirectly in the Israeli military occupation of Palestinian territories. Therefore, by manufacturing some of its products in Israel – and even possibly in the occupied Palestinian territories – Moroccan Oil is a legitimate target under the terms of the call for boycott.

If Moroccan Oil has operations in the occupied Palestinian territories, it would also be in violation of the UN Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and other Business with Regard to Human Rights, which outline the responsibilities of businesses to comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other UN treaties. Article 3 (Section C) of the Norms forbids companies from engaging in and profiting from war crimes, crimes against humanity, and any other violation of international law. Given Israel’s policy of colonial expansion into the Palestinian territories - illegal under international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention (Art. 49, p. 6) - Moroccan Oil would be considered in violation of Norms.

Under the aforementioned Norms, corporations are also prohibited from engaging in actions that obstruct or impede economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. The Norms stipulate that corporations must refrain from any activity which supports, solicits, or encourages states or any other entities to abuse human rights. Accordingly, Moroccan Oil should not invest in, nor profit from, a state that systematically violates the rights of Arab citizens of Israel, and Palestinian residents of the occupied territories.

When should the boycott end?

The boycott of Moroccan Oil will end when the company stops manufacturing products in Israel; or when Israel ceases its military occupation of Palestinian territories.
How else can I pressure Moroccan Oil to disengage from Israel?

CJPME’s boycott campaign is calling upon all individuals and members willing to put pressure on the Israeli government to withdraw from the occupied Palestinian territories. All concerned citizens can visit the CJPME Website at http://www.cjpme.org/bds.htm for additional tools to pressure Moroccan Oil to stop using Israeli manufacturers.

- CJPME encourages individuals to go to its Moroccan Oil boycott action alert at www.cjpme.org/consumerboycott.htm to send their complaints and questions to the executive management of Moroccan Oil and its resellers.

- A selection of letter templates is also available at the CJPME Boycott site at www.cjpme.org/consumerboycott.htm

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1 Moroccan Oil Website. http://moroccanoil.com/en_US/behind. See Behind the Brand Section
2 CJPME investigated the Moroccan Oil brand, and visited numerous hair salons to see Moroccan Oil products. Some of these products were labeled “Made in Canada”, while others were labeled “Made in Israel”.
3 The international trading company Panjiva provides Moroccan Oil’s Israeli address as 16, Levy Moshe, Rishon Lezion, Israel. See http://panjiva.com/Moroccan-Oil-Israel-Ltd/1187179 accessed May 22, 2012
6 Ibid. Section E, paragraph 11.