



UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
CENTRAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 7-019

**RESOLUTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN TO INVESTIGATE
DIVESTMENT FROM COMPANIES THAT VIOLATE PALESTINIAN HUMAN
RIGHTS**

WHEREAS, all students have the responsibility, as tuition-paying members of the University of Michigan community, to critically review and examine the ethics of the University’s financial investments; **AND**

WHEREAS, the President’s Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights serves to “promote University leadership in corporate citizenship with respect to fair labor practices, human rights, and sustainability in its licensing operations”¹; **AND**

WHEREAS, the Procurement Services of the Business and Finance Office at The University of Michigan are committed to “socially responsible procurement [which] is defined as conducting the University of Michigan's business in a manner that meets or exceeds the ethical, legal, commercial and public expectations that society has of business operation”²; **AND**

WHEREAS, in 2016 the Board of Regents, with the support of Central Student Government (CSG), voted to reinstate bylaw 7.01 that expresses the importance of student participation in University decision making, and that, “The Vice President for Student Life will assist students in promoting the establishment of effective mechanisms for such student participation. The University is best served when it considers the impacts of decisions on the student body”³; **AND**

WHEREAS, students’ right to examine the social and moral implications of our investments was further reaffirmed by CSG in 2015 when it approved a

¹ University of Michigan President’s Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights: [Charge to the Standing Committee](#)

² University of Michigan Finance: [Socially Responsible Procurement](#)

³ [CSG resolution to reinstate bylaw 7.01](#); The Michigan Daily: “[Board of Regents votes to reinstate student input into their bylaws](#)”

resolution to investigate investments in the fossil fuel industry⁴; **AND**

WHEREAS, the University of Michigan’s Board of Regents’ divestment from South African Apartheid in 1978 and from tobacco-related companies in 2000 set a moral and procedural precedent for ethical divestment from socially irresponsible companies⁵; **AND**

WHEREAS, Students Allied for Freedom and Equality (SAFE) is a student organization dedicated to advancing the causes of freedom, justice, human rights and equality for all peoples, including Palestinians; **AND**

WHEREAS, as the example of the anti-Apartheid divestment movement shows, it is imperative for students to stand unequivocally against all forms of racism and bigotry globally and on campus, including anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, xenophobia, homophobia, and the anti-Palestinian discrimination reinforced by human rights violations; **AND**

WHEREAS, the authors of the resolution are committed to promoting dignity and respect for all people, and emphasize that the request contained herein is not an attack on any particular identity—especially Jewish identity—or a sweeping criticism of the state of Israel but rather is meant as an acknowledgement of marginalized students’ concerns on campus regarding the University’s investments in unethical corporate practices abroad; **AND**

WHEREAS, SAFE represents the view of Palestinian students and their allies on campus that Palestinian human rights are violated by the Israeli military’s use of weapons and equipment from several companies in which the University invests; **AND**

WHEREAS, Palestinian students and their allies often risk their safety and frequently face intimidation for raising the concern herein presented, including threats of being added to a blacklist that often appears on background checks, which unfairly demonizes, slanders, and compromises their post-graduation and career prospects;⁶ **AND**

⁴ The Michigan Daily: “[CSG Proposes Committee for Fossil Fuel Divestment](#)”

⁵ University of Michigan Investment Policy [South Africa and Tobacco Divestment](#)

⁶ [Petition Against Canary Mission](#)

WHEREAS, in its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan, the University continually expresses its commitment to efforts of equity and inclusion that provide underrepresented students an environment “where every individual feels a sense of belonging and inclusion;”⁷ **AND**

WHEREAS, Palestinian students, as a minority group on campus, receive not the University’s full support, nor the benefits of its plan to foster a more inclusive climate, so long as a proportion of the endowment is invested by the University in companies that violate Palestinian human rights in Israel; **AND**

WHEREAS, United Nations Resolution 242 recognizes Israel’s occupation of Palestinian lands, specifically the territories of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem⁸; **AND**

WHEREAS, United Nations Resolutions 446, 452, 465, 471 and 476 recognize that the expansion of Israeli settlements – which serve as locations of operation for military technology companies that the University of Michigan invests in – are illegal under international law as described in the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention; **AND**

WHEREAS, Israeli state policy infringes upon Palestinian human rights in such ways as the building of settlements on occupied Palestinian land⁹, the uneven distribution of land and water resources¹⁰, the unlawful demolition of Palestinian homes¹¹, the administrative detention of Palestinians without charge¹², the system of checkpoints preventing Palestinians’ right to freedom of movement¹³, the siege and blockade of the occupied Gaza Strip¹⁴, the unlawful execution of Palestinians¹⁵, and the killing of Palestinians in military assaults on the occupied Gaza Strip through all-out war¹⁶; **AND**

⁷ “Executive Summary” in *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan*.

⁸ Includes Areas A, B, and C in the West Bank. The UN cites all the territory occupied in 1967 under resolution 242 which predates the Oslo Accords.

⁹ [Israeli Settlement Policy](#)

¹⁰ [World Bank Report of Water Restrictions Palestinians Denied Fair Access to Water](#); [Water and Sanitation in Palestine](#)

¹¹ [Unlawful West Bank Home Demolitions](#); [Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions](#)

¹² [Administrative Detention of Palestinians](#)

¹³ [Palestinians' Freedom of Movement](#); [Checkpoint Statistics](#)

¹⁴ [Siege and Blockade of Gaza](#); [Ten Years of Israeli Siege of Gaza](#); [Gaza Becoming Uninhabitable](#); [UNOCHA Blockade of Gaza](#)

¹⁵ [Unlawful Killings of Palestinians](#)

WHEREAS, the June 30, 2016 University of Michigan Directly Held Public Equities report lists investments in Boeing, Hewlett-Packard, and United Technologies, three companies that supply weapons and equipment to Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestinian territories in violation of international human rights law¹⁷; **AND**

WHEREAS, in 2016 the University of Michigan’s investments were valued at approximately \$14.8 million for the three companies in total; in Boeing at approximately \$7.7 million, in Hewlett-Packard at approximately \$3.9 million, and in United Technologies at approximately \$3.2 million; **AND**

WHEREAS, Boeing “has been a major supplier of the F-15 Eagle and the AH-64 Apache attack helicopters to Israel. These aircrafts have been used to attack Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, resulting in many civilian casualties. Boeing makes missile systems, F-15 software, Apache Helicopters, and Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAM), a guided air-to-surface weapon”¹⁸; **AND**

WHEREAS, Hewlett-Packard provides “biometric identification systems used at Israeli military checkpoints, which restrict the freedom of movement of Palestinians, facilitate discrimination against Palestinians, and reinforce a stratification of citizenship,”¹⁹ and provides technological services to the Israeli Prison Authority, and provides services and technologies to the Israeli army, among which is the administration of the Israeli navy's IT infrastructure, and the Israeli navy has enforced the naval blockade on the Gaza Strip since 2007; **AND**

WHEREAS, United Technologies provides “Blackhawk helicopters which are used by the Israeli military to attack Palestinian cities, refugee camps and villages. Many civilians have been killed in these attacks [...] [the] Pratt and Whitney Division produces engines for Israel’s F-15 and F-16 aircraft, which have been used against Palestinian civilians”²⁰; **AND**

WHEREAS, the University’s Chief Investment Officer in 2005 laid out the process for forming a committee to investigate the University’s investments

¹⁶ [UN Report on 2008-2009 Israeli War on Gaza](#); [UN Report on 2014 Israeli War on Gaza](#)

¹⁷ [University of Michigan Directly Held Public Equities](#)

¹⁸ [Companies Supporting Israeli Occupation; Boeing](#); [Boeing Products Provided to Israel](#)

¹⁹ [Northwestern University Divestment Resolution](#)

²⁰ [Companies Supporting Israeli Occupation; United Technologies](#)

that requires the following three principles to be met: “The concern to be explored must express the broadly and consistently held position of the campus community over time; there must be reason to believe that the behavior or action in question may be antithetical to the core mission and values of the University; and there must be reason to believe that the organization, industry or entity to be singled out may be uniquely responsible for the problems identified”²¹; **AND**

WHEREAS, the concern presented here meets the first principle insofar as it has been expressed broadly and consistently by the campus community over time, as evidenced by the accompanying statement of support,²² signed by student organizations that represent thousands of students on campus, as well as faculty and other campus community members; **AND**

WHEREAS, the concern presented here meets the second principle insofar as the corporate behavior in question is antithetical to the values of the University, because of its aforementioned commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and further based on the express purpose of the University’s endowment, which is not to “be regarded [as] an instrument of political or social power [but rather to] provide income for the advancement of the important educational and cultural objectives to which the University is dedicated”²³; **AND**

WHEREAS, the concern presented here meets the third principle of responsibility insofar as the Israeli military’s use of the weapons and technology supplied by Boeing, HP, and United Technologies violates Palestinian human rights, and these three companies are therefore uniquely responsible for the deprivation of certain universal human rights, such as the rights “to life, liberty, and security of person;” “to education;” to “privacy, family [and] home;” for Palestinians affected by the checkpoints, prisons, etc. that are serviced by these companies²⁴; **AND**

WHEREAS, the University of Michigan’s investments in the aforementioned companies —whose operations in occupied Palestinian territories are socially and ethically irresponsible — not only personally impact

²¹ [University Investment Policy](#)

²² [Op-ed in the Michigan Daily](#) lists student organization support

²³ [1978 Report and Recommendations](#) of the Senate Assembly Advisory Committee on Financial Affairs on Investment Policies and Social Responsibility

²⁴ [UCLA Divestment Resolution](#)

Palestinian students at the University of Michigan, but also call into question the University's long-standing commitment to invest in socially responsible companies; **AND**

WHEREAS, Palestinian civil society has called on people of conscience around the world to financially pressure companies that contract with the Israeli military until such time it complies with international law²⁵; **AND**

WHEREAS, more than thirty universities across the US such as Stanford University, University of California at Berkeley, Northwestern University, and University of Chicago have passed resolutions to divest from companies that profit from the abuse of Palestinian human rights in Israel and its illegal settlements and that help to facilitate the illegal Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories²⁶; **AND**

WHEREAS, following divestment from Apartheid South Africa, it was decided that, "If the Regents shall determine that a particular issue involves extremely serious moral or ethical questions which are of considerable concern to many members of the University community, an advisory committee consisting of members of the University Senate, students, administration and alumni will be appointed to gather information and formulate recommendations for the Regents' consideration"²⁷; **AND**

WHEREAS, the process of forming an ad hoc committee is assumed by University precedent,²⁸ which following the cases of Apartheid South Africa and tobacco companies, granted the Board of Regents the responsibility to appoint ad hoc committees to investigate divestment²⁹; **AND**

WHEREAS, committee formation by the Regents may follow the report of the Senate Assembly Advisory Committee on Investment Policies and Social Responsibilities, which recommended that the committee membership be "broadly representative of the University community," and therefore may include "two members of the University Senate appointed by the Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs, two students appointed by the current official student government organization, and two administrators appointed by the President."³⁰; **AND**

²⁵ [Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS](#)

²⁶ [Appendix 2 "Universities Passing Divestment"](#)

²⁷ [University of Michigan Board of Regents "March Meeting, 1978"](#)

²⁸ [University Investment Policy](#)

²⁹ [University Investment Policy](#)

³⁰ [1978 Report and Recommendations](#)

WHEREAS, committee proceedings may take action in the following sequence, as determined by the Senate Assembly Advisory Committee: “(1) direct communication of the University’s concern to corporate management via letters or meetings; (2) the publication of statements describing the University’s [position on the company’s unethical behavior] and where appropriate, explanation of these statements at shareholders meetings; (3) divestiture of University holdings in the corporation.”³¹; **AND**

WHEREAS, the authors recognize the potential for the financial effects of divestment to implicate the University’s relationship with these three companies, and therefore ask for the committee’s foremost responsibility to be the investigation of these effects through a minimum year-long process of communication with each of the companies, a precedent set by the University’s process for divestment from Apartheid South Africa³²; **THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED, that CSG calls upon the University of Michigan Regents to follow University precedent and appoint a committee, as stipulated above, to investigate the ethical and moral implications of our investments in the corporations Boeing, HP, and United Technologies, which are involved in humans rights violations against the Palestinian people according to international law³³; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that CSG requests the University of Michigan asset managers to divest, if deemed appropriate by the ad hoc committee’s recommendations following an investigation by that committee, as soon as such divestment may be accomplished from all such companies that, within one year from the date of engagement, remain uncommitted to a diligent plan to terminate all such unethical business activities; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that CSG requests the University of Michigan asset managers investigate possible alternatives for investment such that the University’s assets and investment strategies are not harmed; **AND BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution the request herein presented shall

³¹ Ibid.

³² [University of Michigan Board of Regents "March Meeting, 1978"](#)

³³ Relevant violations of international law: U.N. Charter, Article 25 (1945); U.N. Security Council Resolutions 54, 111, 194, 233, 234, 236, 248, 250, 252, 256, 262, 267, 270, 280, 285, 298, 313, 316, 468, 476.

embody the University of Michigan’s deeply held principles of justice and equality for all people, and affirms that the Palestinian people are not exempt from these principles; **AND BE IT FINALLY**

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the University of Michigan Board of Regents, in addition to the President’s Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights, for their consideration and approval.

Authors

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Presented to the Assembly for *First Reads* on _____

Presented to the Assembly for *Second Reads* on _____

Yes: _____ No: _____ Abs: _____ Date: _____

Signature Necessary: _____ Signature Received By _____: _____