

February 25, 2015

Ireland Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Report

- A wide network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is active in the promotion of boycott, divestments, and sanctions (BDS) campaigns against Israel. These organizations include the Catholic aid organization Trócaire, Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC), Sadaka, and the UK-based ECCR (Ecumenical Council on Corporate Responsibility).
- BDS activities include demonstrations, legal attacks (“lawfare”), and lobbying government institutions and trade unions to endorse BDS policies.
- BDS campaign targets include divestment from Cement Roadstone Holding (CRH) and Veolia, settlements product labeling, and lobbying the Irish government to implement BDS.

The Irish network of NGOs in support of BDS

- Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) is a political advocacy group established in 2001. The organization’s [goals](#) are to lobby Irish government and societal institutions and organize activities in support of the Palestinian cause.
 - IPSC engages in anti-Israeli propaganda to promote [BDS](#) campaigns, the [de-legitimization](#) and [demonization](#) of Israel, and the [Nakba narrative](#).
 - IPSC’s [BDS](#) campaigns include a [cultural boycott](#) of Israeli academics and artists.
 - IPSC endorses the Russell Tribunal on Palestine (RToP), a kangaroo court which accuses Israel of apartheid, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Founded in 2009, the RToP uses a legal façade to create an image of neutrality and credibility, but belies a complete lack of legal legitimacy and basic notions of impartiality and fairness integral to any proceedings.
 - IPSC does not campaign on other conflict situations, focusing only on Israel.
- [Sadaka](#) – The Ireland Palestine Alliance, is an Irish group whose mission is to “maximize support in Ireland for the Palestinian people.” It [promotes](#) BDS campaigns, Palestinian “right of return,” an arms embargo against Israel, and for the Irish government to sever relations with Israel.

Sadaka lobbies trade unions, in cooperation with the group [Trade Unions Friend of Palestine](#); [political parties](#); and the [Irish](#) parliament. As part of its social activities, Sadaka engages in divestment campaigns at [national](#) and [local](#) levels.

- Sadaka campaigns for Israeli [settlement product labeling](#) and for their exclusion from the fiscal benefits enshrined in the Euro-Med Agreement; the group submits positions papers, briefings, and reports to [Irish MPs](#) and to [political parties](#).
- Sadaka lobbied the Irish national government and local authorities to abstain from business with “companies owned or aligned to the Israeli Government or companies complicit in the policies of the Israeli state.”
- Sadaka is also active in educational initiatives. It participated in the program [Education for Reconciliation](#) (2009-2012) funded by the EU through its “PEACE III” program. The project aimed to provide innovative school curricula to promote active citizenship and peace. Sadaka ran educational activities that addressed the Arab-Israeli conflict. No information on Sadaka’s curriculum is

- available, but given Sadaka's political positions, it is unlikely that it provided balanced and un-biased educational materials.
- Sadaka does not campaign on other conflict situations, focusing only on Israel.
 - Trócaire is an Irish Catholic aid organization, which engages in anti-Israel delegitimization campaigns.
 - Acting against Irish government policy, Trócaire conducted a [campaign](#) to sanction Israel (and Europe) by suspending mutually beneficial trade agreements, and attempted to [block Israel's inclusion](#) in the OECD. These actions are consistent with Trócaire's history of political activity against Israel, including a campaign against Israel's security barrier and sponsorship of events commemorating the "Nakba."
 - In 2012, Trócaire published the [report](#) "Sustaining Injustice: The EU Trade with Israeli Settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories," demanding a ban and labeling of settlement products.
 - In a [position paper](#) on the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in Ireland, Trócaire documents human rights violations throughout the world but only recommends Israeli firms for exclusion from Irish government procurement processes.
 - Trócaire's Palestine program officer, Garry Walsh, who wrote "Sustaining Injustice," is former [National Coordinator of the IPSC](#); Eoin Murray, Trócaire's Campaigns Coordinator, was also the [National Coordinator for the IPSC](#) and worked for the [Palestinian Center for Human Rights](#) (PCHR) in Gaza.
 - Trócaire is member of the ECCR (Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility).
 - ECCR (Ecumenical Council on Corporate Responsibility) is a UK-based inter-denominational Christian organization that [promotes BDS](#).
 - ECCR members involved in Israel demonization include: Christian Aid, Pax Christi, Trócaire, and Quakers & Business Group.
 - ECCR manages the UK activities of the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel, a project [founded by](#) the World Council of Churches (WCC). The organization consistently [demonizes](#) Israel; makes accusations of "apartheid," "war crimes," and "Bantustans"; and calls Israel's security barrier, which has [saved countless lives from suicide bombings](#), "evil."
 - ECCR [promotes](#) the Kairos Palestine document that calls for BDS against Israel, denies the Jewish historical connection to Israel in theological terms, and blames Israel solely for the continuation of the conflict. Its purpose is to rally churches globally to support BDS, delegitimization, and demonization directed at the State of Israel.
 - In 2010, ECCR conducted a [Christmas campaign](#) against Israeli products; in 2011 ECCR published a [list of Israeli products](#) for boycott due to alleged connections with "settlement economy."
 - Suzanne Ismail, an anti-Israeli campaign [advocate](#), is also a [blogger](#) for "Quakernomics," a news website of Quaker-affiliated corporate social responsibility initiatives. She has used this platform to [call for votes in favor of Israel boycotts at Co-ops](#).
 - ECCR campaigns on a number of [other issues](#), though calls for boycotts only against Israel.

Divestment campaigns against Cement Roadstone Holding (CRH)

- IPSC led a BDS campaign against the Irish company Cement Roadstone Holding (CRH), due to its business relations with Israeli company Mashav Group Ltd. According to IPSC, CRH contributes to the construction of Israel's security barrier, which IPSC has [labeled](#) an "apartheid wall."
 - The BDS campaign started in 2007 in coordination with the Palestinian Federation of General Trade Unions. The delegation [denounced](#) CRH's involvement in the construction of the security fence and endorsed a BDS strategy that called for a boycott of Israel in European Union (EU) foreign policy.
 - The group organized [demonstrations](#) in Ireland and [protests](#) in the Arab village of Bil'in, which denounced the Irish government and CRH.
 - IPSC also [lobbied](#) Irish trade unions to further its BDS campaign. The same year, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions adopted two [resolutions that endorsed](#) the divestment campaign and BDS support.
- In 2011, IPSC published a [document](#) on its case against CRH, which it then discussed during the Russell Tribunal on Palestine's Cape Town meeting. According to IPSC, CRH shareholders required the company to explain its involvement in allegedly unethical business with Israel.
 - In May 2011, IPSC filed a [complaint](#) with the Irish Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) National Contact Point over CRH's involvement in security barrier construction, arguing that it violated OECD sustainable development and human rights [guidelines](#).
 - Following National Contact Point's unwillingness to open a file on CRH, IPSC sent a [formal letter](#) to the Irish Ministry of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, which oversees National Contact Point, urging the Ministry to consider the complaint. The Ministry's complaint review is currently suspended.
- In 2012, IPSC launched an [online petition](#) calling upon CRH to divest from Israeli companies Neshar and Mashav. Employing an invented legal narrative, the petition [warned](#) CRH that its activities in Israel amount to complicity in international law violations.
- In May 2014, IPSC organized a [sit-in](#) at the CRH annual meeting, demanding that CRH divest from Israel. The British group Jews for Justice for Palestinians also [supported this protest](#).

Divestment campaigns against Veolia

- Veolia is a French company targeted by global BDS campaigns for its involvement in the construction of the Jerusalem Light Rail, which serves neighborhoods in both the western and eastern part of Jerusalem without discrimination. With regards to the light rail, BDS activists falsely accuse Israel of violating international law, "forced transfer of population," and "segregation", charges that have no basis in the law or reality.
- In 2010, IPSC initiated a [campaign to lobby](#) local authorities to divest from Veolia, which provides transportation services in several Irish towns. Cooperating with local authority councilors, IPSC advanced motions to deny renovating contracts with Veolia and to exclude the company from public tenders.
- The NGO Sadaka lobbied the Railway Procurement Agency in attempt to have Dublin Metro divest from Veolia-owned Transway.

BDS campaigns lobbying the Irish Government

- In 2010, the Catholic NGO Trócaire, together with IPSC, [requested](#) the Irish parliamentary Committee on Human Rights to establish an ethical revision procedure for national pension reserve investments.
 - Inspired by the Norwegian and Swedish models, these organizations aim to introduce an Irish body that would decide on the exclusion of companies for investment based on ethical issues related to corporate policies. As in Norway and Sweden, this mechanism would be used to exclude Israeli companies.
 - A representative of the Norwegian Ethical Council, Ms. Eli Lund, participated in the meeting to explore the possibility of [establishing an ethical council in Ireland](#).
- IPSC's Kevin Squires and Dublin City Councilor Tina McVeigh [lobbied](#) the Dublin City Council to adopt a motion condemning Israel and commit itself to lobby the Foreign Ministry to introduce sanctions against Israel. The motion was adopted by the City Council in July 2014.
- Irish Center for Human Rights (ICHR) is an institute of the National University of Ireland, Galway, whose stated mandate is the "study and promotion of human rights and humanitarian law." ICHR is also involved in a number of human rights advocacy projects, in the attempt to influence Irish public policy. One such project is [Business and Human Rights](#) in Ireland, initiated in 2012 to encourage Ireland's policy response to the UN Business and Human Rights Principles.
 - ICHR partners with the radical Palestinian NGO Al-Haq, a leading organization in the demonization of Israel, lawfare, and [promotion of BDS campaigns](#). Shane Darcy, lecturer at ICHR, manages the blog "Business and Human Rights Ireland" and worked with Al-Haq on a UN submission regarding [house demolitions](#).
 - ICHR organized a "[Seminar on Palestine, Business and Human Rights](#)," held October 31, 2014, in which two Al Haq officials, Shawan Jabarin and Wesam Ahmad, participated.
 - Shawan Jabarin has been denied exit visas by Israel and Jordan on several occasions due to his alleged ties to the PFLP terrorist organization. On July 7, 2008, the Israeli Supreme Court [noted](#) that Jabarin is "among the senior activists of the Popular Front terrorist organization." A [June 2007 decision](#) called Jabarin a "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," a human rights defender by day and a terrorist by night.
 - [Jabarin's speech](#) at the event mentioned "the memories of WWII" and "business interests" as causes of the "perpetuation of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory, specifically those interests involved in the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources."
 - Falsely accusing Israel of colonial domination, Shawan Jabarin compared British occupation of Ireland and the Arab-Israeli conflict, stating that in both cases private corporations played a pivotal role in governmental policies.
 - The Seminar was organized in advance of the Irish [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade NGO Forum](#), convened on November 7, 2014. The Forum is a governmental initiative of dialogue with civil society organizations, comprising NGOs working in business and human rights. Fourteen NGOs submitted position papers to Forum, including Al-Haq, Trócaire, and IPSC. The political bias of these NGOs is twofold: first, they advocate for a total ban on cooperation with Israel;

secondly, they falsely claim that business conducted beyond the 1949 Armistice Line amounts to violations of international humanitarian law.

- [Al-Haq's submission](#) reflects the fallacious attempt to find corporations culpable for international humanitarian law violations. This interpretation has been rejected by several courts in different legal systems. For instance, Al-Haq filed a [criminal complaint](#) in 2010 against the Dutch company, Riwal, for alleged complicity "in the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity." The complaint was dismissed in May 2013.
- [Trócaire's Policy Officer Selina Donnelly stated](#) that the Irish government "should exclude from tendering processes any company which is complicit in human rights violations. In one example, by excluding products from or companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements." Recommendation #7 of [Trócaire's submission](#) welcomes [Irish government policy](#) discouraging business relations with "illegal settlements" and suggests to extend the same policy to corporations allegedly involved in human rights violations "in Israel and OPT" (p. 23).
- In February 2014, IPSC submitted to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [a highly politicized position paper](#) that singles out Israel on grounds of alleged violations of international law. Besides the ban on settlement products, IPSC recommends total divestment from any cooperation between Irish public bodies and Israeli entities "so long as Israel is in violation of its obligations under international law" (p. 6).