

For Immediate Release

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OCCUPATION-FREE PORTLAND STANDS WITH PORTLAND'S HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION IN UPHOLDING HUMAN RIGHTS

PORTLAND, OREGON. Occupation-Free Portland (OFP), a coalition of faith, social justice and human rights groups, reaffirms its support of the principled stand taken by the City of Portland's Human Rights Commission (HRC) to endorse OFP's proposal to the City's Socially Responsible Investments Committee.

On October 7, the HRC unanimously voted to endorse OFP's recommendation that four multinational corporations — Caterpillar, G4S, Hewlett-Packard and Motorola Solutions — be placed on the City's Do-Not-Buy List. These four corporations profit from flagrant human rights abuses perpetrated by the State of Israel's illegal military occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

The Human Rights Commission action is in full accord with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, international law and criteria set by the City of Portland's own Socially Responsible Investment Policy in 2014. City policy specifies that "concerns about impacts on human rights" be considered in the City's investment decisions.

"The HRC's decision affirms that human rights standards should be applied when the City of Portland decides where to invest our tax dollars," said OFP member Rod Such. **"These standards reflect our shared commitment to equality, justice and freedom for all people regardless of their race, religion or nationality."**

OFP is outraged by the opposition to this endorsement that the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland and others have launched in response. These groups falsely claim the proposal is "anti-Semitic," "divisive" and "inappropriate" to the mission of the HRC. They have pressured Mayor Charlie Hales to call on the HRC to rescind its vote.

OFP decries these often-used tactics as yet another attempt to silence any criticism of Israeli state policy. It reminds the public that the HRC's vote is not about taking a stand on foreign policy matters, but about upholding human rights by withholding our tax dollars from specified corporations that profit from Israel's illegal and abusive actions in the following ways:

- **Caterpillar** sells militarized D9 bulldozers to the Israeli military for demolishing Palestinian homes, olive groves and villages in order to illegally confiscate land.
- **G4S** provides security systems to Israeli prisons where Palestinians, including children, are held without charge, due process or trial.
- **Hewlett-Packard** provides technology for Israeli ID systems used at checkpoints to restrict Palestinian freedom of movement and enable an apartheid system separating Palestinians from Israeli Jews.
- **Motorola Solutions** provides surveillance technology for Israeli settlements illegally constructed on Palestinian land.

The dismantling of any form of discrimination, racism or abuse has historically engendered pushback and opposition. OFP asserts that such opposition cannot halt the drive for equality, justice and freedom for all people.

Members of Occupation-Free Portland include Jewish Voice for Peace-Portland Chapter, Friends of Sabeel-North America, Lutherans for Justice in the Holy Land, Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation, Students United for Palestinian Equal Rights, Veterans for Peace—Chapter 72, Americans United for Palestinian Human Rights, The International Socialist Organization, Oregon-Idaho United Methodist Conference Holy Land Task Force, and Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East—Portland Chapter.

Press and the public are invited to attend the next meeting of the Human Rights Commission, Wednesday, November 4, from 4:00 to 6:30 pm in the City of Portland Building Auditorium (2nd floor), 1120 SW 5th Avenue, Portland, OR 97204. The Commission will discuss its endorsement of OFP's letter to the Socially Responsible Investments Committee and hear invited testimony and public comment.

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