

اللجنة الوطنية لمقاطعة إسرائيل وفرض العقوبات عليها وسحب الإستثمارات منها

## BDS National Committee (BNC)

[www.BDSmovement.net](http://www.BDSmovement.net)

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### Press Release

The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) calls on Arab states, especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, to exclude Alstom and Veolia from all public tenders, including the Gulf rail network, until they withdraw all their investments from and end their involvement in the Jerusalem Light Rail (JLR) and end their complicity in all other Israeli projects that violate international law and the UN-recognized rights of the Palestinian people.

Alstom and Veolia are two of the largest shareholders of the “City Pass Group” a group of companies that won the tender put forth by the Israeli government in 2002 to establish a light rail in Jerusalem. The JLR aims at irreversibly entrenching the “Judaization” of Jerusalem through connecting its most significant colonial settlements, illegally built on the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) in and around East Jerusalem, with the city of Jerusalem.

In addition to supporting illegal Israeli colonization of Palestinian land, the JLR aims at strengthening the Israeli policy of racial discrimination against Palestinians in occupied East Jerusalem, infringing their rights and ignoring their needs.

Alstom and Veolia’s complicity in the JLR is a clear violation of international law and human rights principles. For this reason, a wide international campaign, spearheaded by the BNC with many international partners, has been launched for the boycott of Alstom and Veolia, achieving significant victories in Sweden, the UK, France and Australia. This campaign, entitled “Derail Veolia/Alstom,” has already contributed to Veolia’s loss of contracts estimated at billions of dollars, forcing it to declare its intent to withdraw from the JLR project.

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\* **BNC Member organizations:** Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine, General Union of Palestinian Workers, Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions, Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), Palestinian National Institute for NGO’s, Federation of Independent Trade Union, Palestine Right of Return Coalition, Occupied Palestine and Golan Heights Initiative, General Union of Palestinian Women, Union of Palestinian Farmers, Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (STW), The National Committee for Popular Resistance, Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), National Committee to Commemorate the Nakba, Civic Coalition for the Defense of Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem (CCDPRJ), Coalition for Jerusalem, Union of Palestinian Charitable Organizations, Palestinian Economic Monitor, Union of Youth Activity Centers-Palestine Refugee Camps

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Despite these important achievements in the West, no Arab state, especially in the Gulf, has to date excluded Alstom or Veolia from bidding for their public contracts, including the contract to manage the Abu Dhabi rail project and the GCC railway network, which is expected to cost \$25 billion. In addition, despite its complicity in colonizing Jerusalem, Alstom has recently won a contract worth 6.8 billion Saudi Riyals to build a high-speed railway linking Mecca and Medina.

The BNC strongly urges Arab governments to practically translate their consistent verbal support for Palestinian rights in Jerusalem into action, at least by refusing to deal on a business-as-usual basis with companies implicated in violating international law and Palestinian right, particularly in Jerusalem, where a gradual but persistent Israeli campaign is waged to expel the city's indigenous Palestinian inhabitants from it.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), in cooperation with the French solidarity organization, Association France-Palestine Solidarite (AFPS), has filed a lawsuit in French courts as early as 2006 calling for legal action against the two companies, in accordance with French civil law. In early January of the year 2008, the court ordered the two companies to provide copies of the contract signed with the Israeli government, for consideration and resolution of the issue. The case continues in French courts.

On behalf of Palestinian civil society, particularly in occupied Jerusalem, we call on all states, particularly Arab states, to exclude Alstom and Veolia from all contracts and tenders until they completely withdraw from the JLR and end their complicity in all Israeli projects that violate international law and the rights of the Palestinian people.

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