

Corporate America in Israel and Illegal Settlements

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US companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements are the tip of the iceberg in bilateral economic, financial, and military relations.

According to the US Chamber of Commerce, over 2,500 US companies operate in Israel, including a virtual who's who of corporate America.

In 1985, the US/Israeli free trade agreement was the first of its kind between the US and another country — two years before the 1987 US/Canada FTA, nine years before NAFTA (1994).

Since then, bilateral US/Israeli trade grew to tens of billions of dollars annually, well over \$50 billion a year today, Israeli companies investing about half that amount in the US.

Corporate America operates hundreds of R & D centers in the Jewish state.

Well-known names include 3M, Amazon, AMD, Apple, Applied Materials, AT&T, Broadcom, Citigroup, Cisco, eBay, Facebook, GE, GM, Google, HP, IBM, Intel, John Deere, J&J, Merck, Microsoft, Monsanto, Motorola, PepsiCo, Qualcomm, Texas Instruments, Xerox, and Yahoo, among others.

Israeli firms comprise the second largest number of foreign NASDAQ listings after China.

The US and Israel have cooperative agreements on civil aviation, IT, cybersecurity, intelligence, health, medical, biotech and life sciences, energy, space, transportation, and of course all things related to its military and occupation of historic Palestine.

Both countries partner in each other's wars directly and indirectly.

The clearest examples are US aid to Israel (for military and related purposes) amounting to over \$10 million daily, along with Jewish state undeclared war on Syria, by its own admission terror-bombing the country hundreds of times in recent years.

On Wednesday, the UN Human Rights Council published names of 112 companies that operate in illegal Israeli settlements.

They're mostly Israeli companies. Others are headquartered abroad, including US ones.

Names of US companies in the settlements were published earlier by the Global BDS Movement.

They include L'Oreal, the Body Shop, B & W Foods, Black & Decker, Victoria's Secret, Airbnb,

Landmark Ventures, Caterpillar, and Hewlett Packard, among others.

In 2016, the UN Human Council included Coca Cola on a list of 206 companies operating in Israeli settlements, mostly Israeli ones.

In 2018, the Palestinian Policy Network said “(h)undreds of businesses...operate...without consequence in” Israeli settlements, including many US ones.

In the same year, the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) said “a list of 206 businesses (was) created” that operate in the settlements, their names to be disclosed “in a future update.”

According to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, companies are required to determine whether their operations harm human rights in areas where they operate and receive supplies.

Human Rights Council Res. 31/36 states that firms operating in Israeli settlements contribute to the severity of its human rights violations — by conducting business on stolen Palestinian land, harming its indigenous people.

OHCHR was tasked with compiling a list of companies that “directly and indirectly enabled, facilitated, and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements.”

Labeled a “blacklist” is a way to shame offenders into compliance.

McDonald’s operates in Israel, notably not in the settlements, earlier saying its policy is not to operate across the pre-1967 green line.

European government advisories warned companies of the economic, financial, and legal risks of operating in illegal settlements.

US companies on the HRC’s current list include Airbnb, Expedia Group, TripAdvisor, Booking Holdings, General Mills, and Motorola.

Other US companies operating in Israel not named above include Disney, Home Depot, Revlon, Starbucks, the Limited, News Corp., Sara Lee, and many others.

The Human Rights Council charged the OHCHR with annually updating its database of companies operating in Israel “directly and indirectly, enabl(ing), facilitat(ing), and profit(ing) from the construction and growth of the Israeli settlements.”

Operations of concern are firms supplying construction materials, surveillance equipment, security, banking and financial services, extracting natural resources, and whatever else contributes to the existence and functioning of settlements.

Unanimously adopted Security Council Resolution 2334 (December 2016) affirmed the illegality of Israeli settlements.

Since established following Israel’s June 1967 aggression, seizing the remaining 22% of historic Palestine not stolen in 1948, no world community action was taken to stop them.

Nor to enforce Fourth Geneva’s Article 49. It prohibits “(i)ndividual or mass forcible

transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not...regardless of their motive.”

Publishing a database of companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements won't halt their expansion or construction of new ones.

But it's more evidence of US/Western ties to Israeli international law breaches, including human rights abuses, at the expense of long-suffering Palestinians.

One-sided US support for Israel exposes the futility of negotiations with its officials by Palestinians when undertaken.

Along with the US war OF terror, not on it, the Israeli/Palestinian peace process is the greatest hoax in modern times.

Palestinian unity and resistance alone is their only chance to be free one day from subjugation under Israel's repressive boot.

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