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**Human rights situation in Palestine and other
occupied Arab territories**

Written statement* submitted by the Amuta for NGO Responsibility, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[13 February 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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Statement of the Amuta for NGO Responsibility European Union Providing Major Financial Support to BDS NGOs

BDS (boycott, divestment, and sanctions) is a discriminatory and regressive campaign aimed at eliminating the self-determination of the Jewish people in their historic homeland.

Because of this prejudice, leaders around the world have condemned and rejected BDS, including many officials from the European Union. For instance, Frederica Mogherini, the EU's foreign affairs minister, made clear that "the EU rejects the BDS campaign's attempts to isolate Israel and is opposed to any boycott of Israel." The EU's Ambassador to Israel has noted that "there is a big, big difference between legitimate criticism of Israel policies and BDS," and because of its nature, the international community must be "vigilant" against it.

Despite these strong statements, the EU and its member states are providing tens of millions of euros in funding to NGOs promoting BDS.

The EU is the single largest donor to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the Arab-Israeli conflict, accounting for NIS 28.1 million in 2012-2014 to politicized Israeli NGOs alone.

Indeed, NGO funding is a central component of EU foreign policy, claiming to promote peace, cooperation, and human rights. In contrast to the stated objectives, the EU funds a number of highly biased and politicized NGOs that exploit the rhetoric of human rights to promote anti-Israel BDS and lawfare campaigns, inflammatory rhetoric, and activities that oppose a two-state framework. Due to the highly complex and poorly coordinated nature of EU aid and to the lack of a consolidated database, it is impossible to determine the exact amount or proportions of EU funding to organizations that promote anti-Israel BDS.

However, NGO Monitor, a project of the Amuta for NGO Responsibility, reviewed a number of EU regional funding programs designated for Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza, and found that **29 out of 100 EU grants administered through the frameworks reviewed funnel funds to BDS organizations (€16.7 million out of €67.1 million – roughly 25%). 42 out of 180 EU grantees in total support BDS** – either through participation in activities and events, signing of petitions and initiatives, and/or membership in explicit BDS platforms. Several organizations were the recipients of more than one grant.¹

When confronted by this clear evidence of funding for NGOs with agendas or values that contradict EU policy, the EU's recurring response is that it "funds projects submitted by NGOs, in line with [the] EU's fundamental principles and values, but not NGOs themselves."

This distinction is irrelevant and unconvincing. Project funding inevitably is used for overall organization and activity expenses. Because money is fungible, EU funding ostensibly allocated to specific projects also supports the NGO's infrastructure including funding for staff, equipment, office space, publicity for the organization and its campaigns, and the significant costs of writing more grant applications, as well as allowing officials of these NGOs to travel and promote their agendas around the world. In several cases, EU funding comprises 50%, 60%, or even 75% of an NGO recipient's entire budget. Moreover, many recipients feature the EU symbol on their publications and websites, bolstering their legitimacy and linking the EU with the broader political activities and campaigns of the NGOs – such as boycotts and the rejection of normalization. The EU logo has even appeared on BDS materials themselves.

For example, a grant titled "Performing Arts: A Pathway Towards Self Expression and Democracy" is a representative example of the EU's severely flawed logic. In 2014, **during their participation in the EU's Cultural Programme**, all

¹ See NGO Monitor, "EU Funding to NGOs Active in Anti-Israel BDS Campaigns," January 23, 2017 <http://www.ngo-monitor.org/reports/eu-funding-ngos-active-anti-israel-bds-campaigns/> This report specifically analyzes direct EU funding for BDS organizations. NGO Monitor's website also documents dozens of grants made by EU member states to NGOs promoting BDS.

12 beneficiaries of this grant initiated a group statement calling for a cultural and academic boycott of Israel. The group officially registered as the Palestinian Performing Arts Network in the Palestinian Ministry of Interior in February 2015, also during the members' participation in the EU program. According to their website, which features their BDS statement, the EU and the Swedish consulate in Jerusalem are their sole donors.

There is no logical reason why the EU continues to compromise its values and its integrity by supporting NGOs that actively contradict its principles and policies. The EU would never fund projects of an organization that promotes anti-Muslim racism, hatred of gays, or attacks on women; any organization that expressed such viewpoints rightly would be deemed ineligible for project funding or would have it immediately eliminated if such comments were exposed. Yet, gross expressions of antisemitism, support for and justification of terrorism, rejection of two states for two peoples, or campaigning to boycott and isolate Israel appear to be no bar to receiving millions of euros in taxpayer funding from the EU and its member states.

The EU must put an end to this damaging funding.
