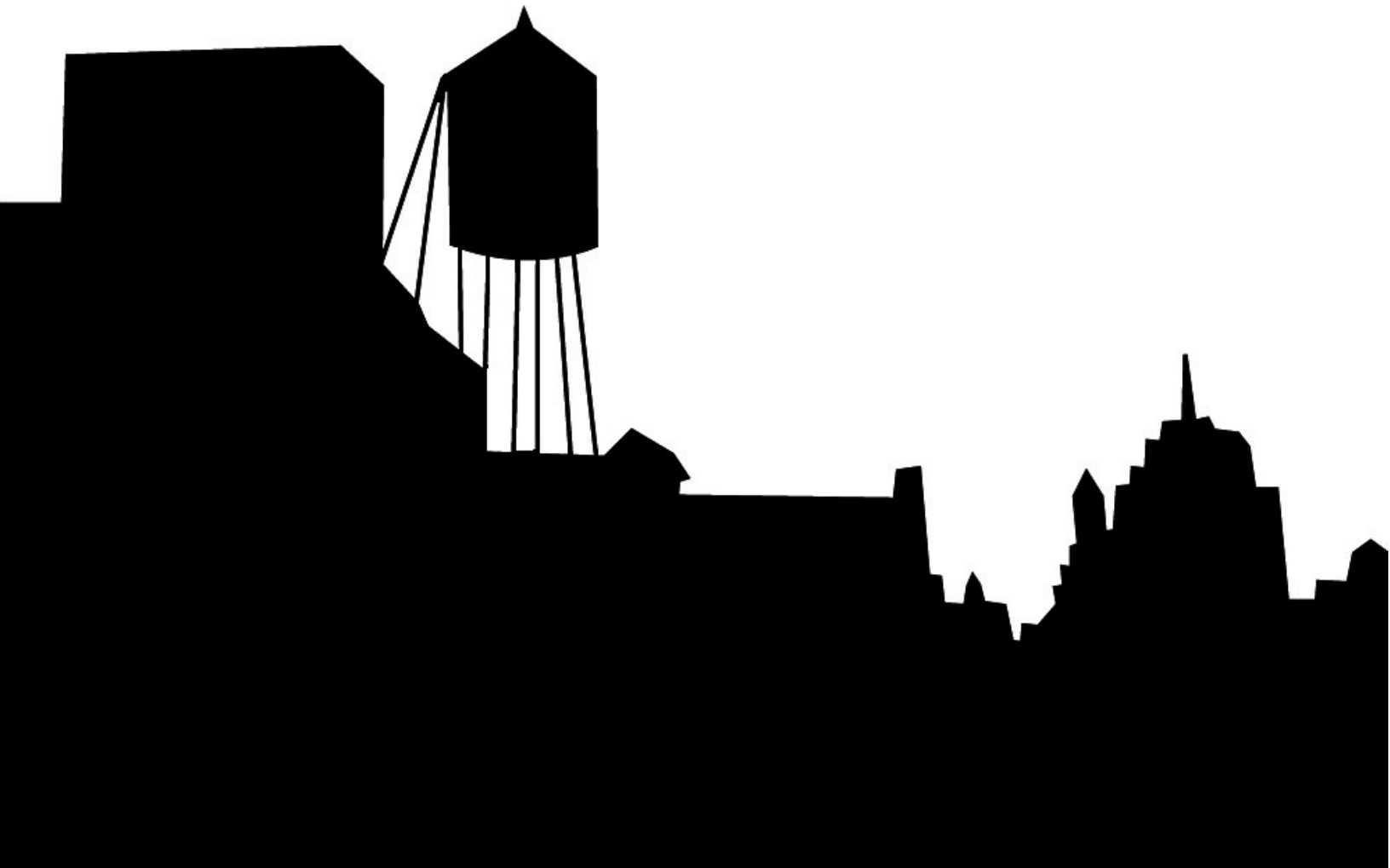




**F|O|S|N|A**

FRIENDS of SABEEL NORTH AMERICA

# MUNICIPAL|DIVESTMENT ORGANIZING|GUIDE





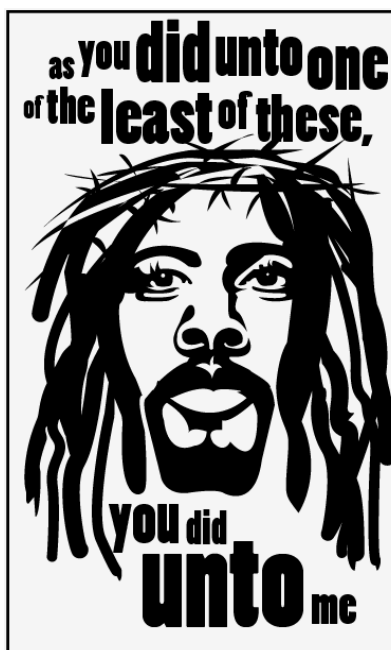
# Tactics for Municipal Divestment

## Stepping Up to Divestment

Your group has been meeting, inviting speakers, reading, and discussing Palestine. Now you are ready to work for change by engaging in a solid boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) campaign, but you are unsure how to do that. This campaign packet is designed for you.

Friends of Sabeel—North America (FOSNA) is organizing a divestment campaign aimed at big municipal divestment from com-

panies that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestine, from its prison system, where children are detained and abused, the construction of settlements and the apartheid wall. By urging local governments to divest from contracts with these companies, we aim to educate the public about Israeli abuse of Palestinian human rights and to put pressure on the companies to abandon their work within Israel. We invite you to join us.



Matthew 30:45, Illustration by Fellicia Follum

## Who is Friends of Sabeel North America?

We are a non-profit, tax-exempt Christian ecumenical organization, rooted in liberation theology, seeking justice and peace in the Holy Land through non-violence and education. Sabeel is an international peace movement initiated by Palestinian Christians, who seek a just peace as defined by international law and existing United Nations resolutions.

### Advice contained within this packet:

- From St. Louis's campaign against Veolia
- From Sonoma County's campaign against Veolia
- From Durham's campaign against G4S

### Inside this resource:

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## Municipal Campaigns



We encourage groups to work on municipal campaigns, targeting governmental entities that have contracted, or are proposing to contract, with companies profiting off the violation of Palestinian human rights in their local areas. We urge you to get to know the local political powers and learn how the system works, where the authority lies, and what works best with local governing bodies.

Much of the work done by your local government involves contracts with outside companies, corporations, and businesses. Contracts are legally binding agreements between two or more parties. Typically a local governmental entity will announce a contract opportunity on a procurement portal, and companies will then bid for that contract. After a preset time (typically a few months) bidding will close and the city council, school board, or other entity will then review each bid and decide on an awardee. The contract will then enter into force for a specified period of time. After that period the contract will expire and the process starts again.

Caterpillar, G4S, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard, and Motorola engage in a specific range of activities, so groups do not need to exhaustively look through every contract opportunity their municipality puts out. The company is unlikely to be bidding on play-

ground equipment for a local school, but might be seeking to provide the metal detectors for that same school.

However, even if none of your local governmental entities have contracts with these companies, or not one that can be effectively attacked, don't give up! Two other options are to lobby for a proactive ban against corporations with a proven track record of violating human rights, which obviously includes these companies, or to find another local target that oppresses Palestinians and other groups around the world and mobilize against it!

A contract can be broken down into several different stages: tentative, preparative, signed, in-force, and expiring. Each of these have different possibilities for action and accessibility.





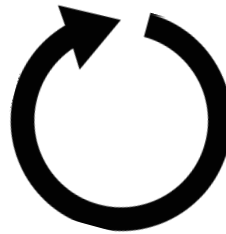
## The Contract Cycle: Different Stages

Below is an illustration of the different stages of a contract cycle. These are not official categories but useful in thinking about which tactics to use to most effectively leverage power on a contract.

**Expiring** is the few months before the end of the contract. Groups should not waste a tremendous amount of energy trying to unseat a standing contract at this stage, but should be watchful for a renewal of the contract and push for a new bidding process, which would then reset the process back to stage one, tentative.

**Tentative** is when the contract is beginning to be explored by the contracting body, often before bidding is started and while bidding is occurring. This is the most vulnerable stage for a contract, and if your campaign can find out about this proposed contract, raising a quick media stink or call-in day to local government can convince your target to back out of the process or politicians to publicly distance themselves from the target.

**Preparative** is when the contract bidding period has closed and the governing body and relevant bureaucracies are deciding on which bid (or bids) should be awarded the contract. Often an inside game here with strategic lobbying can move mountains, especially if it's an election year.



**In-Force** is the majority of the duration of the contract, which means that the target is both very present in the local community and is legally entrenched. Grassroots mobilization within the local community to gradually scale power against the target is the recommended course of action during this period, with a larger campaign highlighting any actions taken by the target against the local community.

**Signed** is the period immediately following the awarding of a contract to our target. This is often very difficult to get the contract annulled at this point, but raising a ruckus about it in the media can galvanize public opinion for the grassroots mobilizing you'll need to do during the period the contract is in-force.

### Advice from St. Louis, MO

“Timing was crucial to this campaign. We heard through an ally who had set up a Google Alert for “Veolia St. Louis” that Veolia was exploring options (Preparative Stage) for a contract in St. Louis with the local government, which also happened to be an election year. Realizing this, and seeing that the incumbent mayor, who was a proponent of Veolia’s bid, was incredibly unpopular, we saw an opportunity to push this into an election issue and define the conversation before the media got ahold of the narrative.”



## Examples of Potential Divestment Campaigns

### Motorola Solutions

Motorola and its subsidiaries support several aspects of the Israeli occupation.

Motorola is the primary provider of modes of communication for the Israeli military, which means that all units of the military are receiving their orders via a Motorola system. Motorola's involvement with telecommunication devices may also be traced to your local municipal contracts.

Motorola also provides surveillance systems for settlements in the occupied West Bank. Some projects include a "virtual fence" which consists of thermal and optical cameras connected to security forces. They can extend up to 700 meters outside of a settlement and thus can prevent Palestinians from working their land adjacent to settlements. In this way, the system reinforces settlement infrastructure and helps confiscate additional land from Palestinians.

Motorola owns 49% of Taldor Communications, which signed a deal with Visuals Defense Inc. in 2008. It specializes in manufacturing watchtowers, motion sensors, X-rays, and other products that Israeli checkpoints, terminals, the Separation Wall, and illegal settlements rely on.

BDS win: Until 2009, Motorola Israel was "Israel's leading company in the design and manufacture of electronic fuses for aircraft bombs and guided munitions," including those used against civilians in the assault on Gaza in 2008—2009. Under pressure from campaigns in the United States, Motorola Israel sold the department that produces the fuses in April 2009.

### Caterpillar



House demolition in Rafah Seam Zone by an armored Caterpillar D9. (Photo: Khalil Hamra)

They are also used in the construction of the separation wall, and settlement construction. The most famous models of weaponized Caterpillars are the D9 (Dawn Thunder) and D10 bulldozers. The D9 can function unmanned and was commonly used in the December 2008 attacks on Gaza.



Motorola's MotoEagle Surveillance System radar station outside the settlement of Otnel.

(Photo: Dror)



# Tactics for Municipal Divestment

## Examples of Potential Divestment Campaigns

### Hewlett-Packard

HP is a popular provider of electronic services in the United States but did you know that it also provide services and technologies to the Israeli army? An example of this is the BASEL System or the “Checkpoint System,” a biometric access control system which consists of HP manufactured biometric ID cards and machines that are installed at all of the major checkpoints in the West Bank. This system is used to restrict the movement of Palestinians.

HP also provides the central servers for the operational system of the Israeli Prison Service and executed a project of email storage and archives that help the prisons function. Additionally, HP provides services to illegal Israeli settlements, including taking part in the development of the “Smart City Project” in the settlement of Ariel.



### Group 4 Securicor (G4S)



Group 4 Securicor, or G4S, is one of the largest private sector employers in the world and, measured in revenue, it is the world’s largest security company. It operates in 125 different countries and has over 620,000 employees. South African businessman Ashley Almanza has been the CEO of G4S since June 2013.

G4S Israel is one of the major security system providers to the Israeli government. In 2007, the Israeli subsidiary of G4S signed a contract with the Israel Prison Service specifically aimed at providing security services for Israeli prisons where Palestinian political prisoners, including children, are held without a trial and subjected to torture.

Across the United States, G4S holds many public contracts. For example, G4S runs juvenile detention facilities, operates deportation buses between the U.S.-Mexico border, and has held contracts supporting Guantanamo Bay. Closer to home, G4S helps guards courthouses, public transportation systems, museums, and college campuses, to name a few.

## Tactic: Addressing Local Representatives

Grassroots lobbying involves individuals or small groups in contacting and influencing local representatives through personal visits and discussions. It can be an effective way to influence political opinion and build allies in the political sphere. Below are some tips to consider in order to make your personal engagement in the political sphere most effective as a lobbyist.

It is important to remember to never be late and listen well to everyone you talk to or come into contact with in the office. Making a good impression is critical.

1. Introduce yourself as a constituent. They're in office to represent you! Never forget this, so when you introduce yourself, place yourself as a member of their constituency. For example: "Hi, my name is Khader, I'm a member of the local Palestinian community and an ordained priest at West Kensington Orthodox Church in Councilman Sanchez's district." It shows you are a well-established constituent and are there on behalf of others important to the local representative.
2. Be confident. If you care about the issue there is no need to memorize a speech verbatim when conversing with local representatives. Speak from the heart and be proud of what matters to you. Show your local representative why you care.
3. Find common ground. There will be many issues you and your local representative disagree on, but don't let this deter you. Find out what issues you do agree on and thank them for their work in that area. This aids in the process of building a good relationship with them and the office that can benefit your lobbying goals.
4. Present yourself respectfully. Remember that lobbying requires the personal interaction between human beings, so it is critical that you present yourself in a well-mannered and meaningful way. Be courteous and polite, and dress respectfully when interacting with those you wish to influence.
5. Ask something specific. What exactly is it that you want out of this representative? Politely make it clear what your desires are, while remaining positive and confident, so no one's time is wasted.
6. Have it in writing. Providing an informative, succinct factsheet to your local representatives and their staff helps them to remember the discussion and the issue you are bringing to their attention.
7. Be persistent. It is critical to follow up, then follow up again. You can do this by sending thank you notes and continuing to think about how you can build a positive relationship with the office. Make it a point to return in person with a related, but different, piece of legislation on the issue in order to establish yourself or group as an influential constituent on that issue.
8. Say thank you! If your local representatives decide to join the campaign, thank them for their support and make sure the community is aware of this success in a way that positively highlights the campaign, your group, and the political actors involved in making this a success.

Lobbying to prevent municipal contracts to companies profiting from oppression is an attempt to gain political allies in your community that will ultimately aid in supporting the global movement that helps end the occupation of Palestine. Try to stay in the mindset that lobbying is about building positive relationships with potential political allies, not creating negative ones. You will come up against representatives opposed to your campaign, but don't be deterred, and remember to shift to other representatives fairly quickly when this happens.

### Advice from St. Louis, MO

"Once we became an election issue, we stayed with the minutia of the campaign, following the candidates, or 'bird dogging,' making sure that each candidate was on the record about where they stood on the Veolia contract. Research campaign funding and then hold politicians accountable to the people. Corruption makes a great story. Having a presence at the city hall meetings involving the budget is crucial to making sure that they don't pass it through under the radar. Become familiar with the layout and workings of your local city council."





# Tactics for Municipal Divestment

## Tactic: Wrangling the Media

There are many possibilities for engaging the media in your campaign. You can write op-eds and press releases to local media outlets; approach journalists and editors; participate in radio interviews; engage social, community, and website media; and much more. Make sure that you right-size your media strategy and never underestimate the impact of your local paper or radio station. Here are some quick tips for when and how to use the media:

1. **Journalists** Two major things to consider about journalists: (a) If a journalist reaches out to you, do your research on that journalist so you know what perspective they will bring to the interview. (b) Journalist allies doing long-term coverage of your campaign can be very helpful in influencing public opinion when this coverage is consistent.

2. **Press releases** are good starting points for your campaign. They are a way to let journalists and local media sources know about the issues you are passionately involved in. However, no journalist will care about your press release unless something newsworthy accompanies its release. Timing is key!

3. **Op-eds** are a strategic way to share your opinion and should be used (after the press release) to strengthen your voice and opinion. **It is very useful and powerful to create allies in the media.** If the divestment campaign is expressed clearly and persuasively, op-eds can potentially sway public opinion and gain local journalist allies focusing on your campaign from beginning to end. Remember to keep the op-ed concise and easy to understand with short sentences, and a strong voice. Don't be afraid to tell readers why they should care.

4. **Digital media** includes Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress, Tumblr, etc. Digital media should be utilized to support your campaign but it should not be the main focus on the campaign itself. It is a way to get information and progress out to the local and global community about your efforts. It is a great method for supporting the campaign but should not take precedence over lobbying and media outreach.



Photo of Maali Adnan, daughter of Palestinian political prisoner Khader Adnan, stands next to a picture of her father outside Israel's Ofer prison on 30 January 2012. (Photo: AFP - Abbas Momani)

### Advice from Sonoma, CA

“When our group decided to go public with our municipal campaign, we had already done the work on getting their proposal on the docket of the local Human Rights council, and timed our press announcement to build off of discussion of the proposal, which we knew was going to be heated, trying to ride the media controversy wave.”

It may be that you end up not being able to galvanize local media attention. There is a great deal that you can do outside the media, and there are many friendly media outlets available for Palestine activists. There are limits to utilizing the media in your campaign. It is not the be-all and end-all but a tool to be used when and where it works without depending on it as the strongest leg of the campaign. Gaining local media coverage can be difficult, especially on such intense topics as the occupation of Palestine, so don't be deterred if gaining media support does not work in your favor.



## Tactic: Mobilizing the Grassroots

Grassroots organizing is a long, gradual process, bringing together different communities to leverage power to move your target. This tactic is the only one in the packet that requires large numbers of people to be successful, which means that you'll be working with folks from all over the political map. The basis for this tactic is the belief in the power of large groups of people mobilized to push for a specific change in their community, which starts outside of the democratic process but translates community power into the political system. Grassroots mobilizing is an initial step for local groups to branch out statewide, nationally, and transnationally. Take, for example, the Black Lives Matter movement, started by three black queer women in 2013. They wanted to share stories that highlighted black lives in response to local and state violence and repression, a task that within two years has evolved into one of the largest movements happening around the globe. It was a long process ignited by women in various cities who banded together with a common goal and vision that combated power.

When mobilizing from the grassroots, it is important to build and sustain coalitions with a diverse group of organizations as a way to strengthen your movement. Effective coalition building is inclusive, and the most powerful movements will embody a diverse range of groups whose makeup and philosophy may be different from our own. Ultimately we are all pushing back against the dominating modes of power. Be aware and mindful of these dif-



Israeli police arrest a Palestinian youth following clashes after Friday prayers in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Wadi al-Joz, October 24, 2014. (Photo: REUTERS/Finbarr O'Reilly)

### Advice from St. Louis, MO

“Have a conversation with your group early about what y’all are willing to do to get a victory in your city. This will normally involve taking a huge step back in terms of not making the messaging about Palestine. Your opposition will bring Palestine into the picture and you can respond, but in order to bring in your coalition partners you’ll need to make sure that they’re getting an equal time on the mic. When we formed our wider coalition against Veolia, we said the goal is about the target, not whose messaging gets the most coverage. That way, when Veolia tried to make the issue just about Israel & Palestine our coalition partners brought up their parts of the messaging that put the focus back on Veolia. Make the coalition a separate group with separate visual identity, website, and name. Also, keep the meetings and time commitments reasonable for folks, 1/month or something similar, which then necessitates groups having a fair amount of autonomy and trust within the coalition.”

ferences with welcoming acceptance of potential allies. Seek out groups that are willing to support the Palestinian cause and that you can return the favor to when the times comes. Remember, diversity is our strength.

Considering that grassroots mobilization requires building coalitions over a long time frame, Palestine-specific messaging will never be paramount. So it is crucial that the local group figures out how to always effectively represent the municipal campaign as a whole.



# Tactics for Municipal Divestment

## Tactic: Direct Action Gets the Goods

We like to think of direct action as creative ways to disrupt everyday life that help bring attention to your cause. Think of direct action as street theater rather than a rally. Direct action is a way to raise awareness and prevent people from ignoring you.

Direct action can be tricky to navigate because the protestors must be sure that this approach builds more allies than it makes enemies. You use direct action if and when your group is not successful with the media and lobbying.

If your message is not being heard, perhaps it is time for direct actions efforts, one that will disrupt the general public and force people to listen to your message. It is an antagonistic way of sending a message to the power elite and decision makers. There always will be people who criticize and respond negatively to direct action protests, so you want to make sure, whatever direct action you decide to organize fits logically into the overall goals of the campaign and that it doesn't derail or weaken the movement.

Things to consider:

1. Inform media beforehand for coverage. Direct action will be more effective as you reach more people.
2. Know your audience and what you want to say to them.
3. Make sure the action fits logically into the philosophical framework of your campaign.
4. Don't let the action derail or weaken your campaign.

### Advice from Durham, NC

“One of the discussions we were always having was about when we needed to play the inside game versus the outside game. We decided that our person who had the ear of the city council would have a preset amount of time to lobby them to take the next step, otherwise we would do a direct action. Then that was communicated as part of our lobbying effort and kept both groups on the same path.”



Palestine Solidarity Campaign photo of protestors outside of a G4S shareholders meeting on May 14, 2013. (Photo: Aimee Valinski)

5. Direct action can be risky. Your group should consider the possible consequences before engaging in the action and prepare for them.
6. Concurrently, standing up to power in such a provocative way puts you in a position to be intensely criticized and your character attacked by opponents. This can have long-term effects as well as short-term, but if you thoughtfully prepare and work as a team, you can get through the tough parts of direct action.



### When you need to call for help

FOSNA's national organizers if you're interested in launching a G4S campaign, or are running into organizational or political issues with your campaign that you need help with. The national organizers are there to help with strategic visioning, political education and awareness, and brainstorming solutions to intractable problems within the campaign. You can also contact us if you have questions on theological messaging as well Palestine.

<http://fosna.org/> or email [advocacy@fosna.org](mailto:advocacy@fosna.org)

The Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU) if you need help with anything related to the media, or any help with your secular messaging on a large scale. IMEU has many contacts with local papers and can help brainstorm with you to right-size your media strategy, craft your message to your audience, and ensure you get placements in the media outlets you target.

<http://imeu.org/>

Palestine Legal Support (PLS) if you have run into legal challenges with your campaign or are being attacked through legal means. The four lawyers who are members of PLS have very busy schedules but are available to help activists during crisis situations. Please also inform FOSNA staff if this happens.

<http://palestinelegalsupport.org/>

