



**The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC) is a wide coalition of the largest Palestinian mass organizations, trade unions, networks and organizations.**

BNC member organizations:

Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine

Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO)

Palestinian Nat'l Institute for NGOs

Global Palestine Right of Return Coalition

Palestinian Trade Union Coalition for BDS (PTUC-BDS)

Federation of Indep. Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Workers

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions

Gen. Union of Palestinian Women

Union of Palestinian Farmers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Teachers

Gen. Union of Palestinian Writers

Palestinian Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees (PFUPE)

Union of Professional Associations

Gen. Union of Palestinian Peasants

Union of Public Employees in Palestine-Civil Sector

Grassroots Palestinian Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign (STW)

Nat'l Committee for Grassroots Resistance

Pal. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

Nat'l Committee to Commemorate the Nakba

Civic Coalition for the Defense of Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem

Coalition for Jerusalem

Union of Pal. Charitable Organizations

Palestinian Economic Monitor

Union of Youth Activity Centers-Palestine Refugee Camps

Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Initiative

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## **Palestinian civil society welcomes Agrexco liquidation, calls for celebration of this BDS victory**

- Supporters of Palestinian rights claim victory as target Agrexco ordered into liquidation
- Court papers warn that company is Israeli symbol whose downfall will have 'wider implications'
- Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions National Committee (BNC) calls on the movement internationally to celebrate this victory and to intensify BDS campaigns

Campaigners for Palestinian rights are celebrating after the primary Israeli agricultural produce export company Agrexco, which has been a key target of the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement in support of Palestinian rights, has been ordered into liquidation after being unable to pay its creditors.

Agrexco is a partially state-owned Israeli exporter responsible for the export of a large proportion of fresh Israeli produce, including 60-70% of the agricultural produce grown in Israel's illegal settlements in Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). In a translation of the court documents on the liquidation process that the BNC obtained, it is clearly stated that Agrexco acted as an arm of the Israeli state, effectively providing state subsidies to the agricultural sector. The documents indicate criticism of the government for allowing the company to default on its debts and also warn that Agrexco is a primary Israeli symbol and that its downfall is likely to have great implications.

"We congratulate and warmly salute our European partners for their dedicated and determined campaign against Agrexco. This ruling follows the news that Veolia, a French multinational that has lost billions of euros worth of municipality contracts over its provision of infrastructure to illegal Israeli settlements, is facing a financial meltdown.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, the BDS movement is coming of age and is raising the cost of corporate complicity with Israeli war crimes. Strategic BDS campaigns are proving, through every day successes, that BDS is the most effective form of solidarity needed to challenge Israel's system of colonialism, occupation and apartheid" said Jamal Juma', coordinator of Stop the Wall Campaign and member of BNC secretariat.

Adel Abu Ni'meh, director of the Palestinian Farmers Union, a member organisation of the Palestinian BDS National Committee, welcomed the news but warned that "Agrexco assets are still being sold. We are following this closely and call on all international companies to withdraw their offers. Those companies that purchase Agrexco assets and brand names or seek to replace the company as the primary Israeli agricultural exporter will be similarly targeted by the BDS movement".

Agrexco has been targeted with popular boycotts, blockades, demonstrations and direct action throughout Europe. In France, a broad civil society coalition containing dozens of organisations took legal action against the company and fiercely opposed the construction of a terminal at Sete that has laid unused since its construction.<sup>2</sup> In Italy and the UK, campaigners took direct action and pressured supermarkets to drop the Agrexco brand.<sup>3</sup> In July, a new coalition of organisations from over 13 European countries vowed to "put an end to Agrexco's presence in Europe".<sup>4</sup> The coalition is expected to examine developments and may initiate new campaigns in response to the outcome of the liquidation.

As respected Israeli economist Shir Hever has stated, the European-wide campaign against the company was among the factors that led to the company's downfall. "The company has been found to produce misleading reports, and did not warn its investors of the possible impact of the BDS campaign to boycott the company products. Many farmers have left the company, opting to work with competing ones which have not yet been at the focus of the BDS campaign, and as a result Agrexco entered a liquidity crisis. Several companies have considered bidding to buy Agrexco, but have withdrawn their bids after a brief research, which has no doubt uncovered the company's prominence in the BDS campaign, among other things," he explained.

The campaign against Agrexco was initiated in response to the 2005 call from Palestinian civil society for boycotts, divestment initiatives and sanctions on Israel and its supporters until the state complies with international law by ending its occupation and dismantling its apartheid Wall, ensuring equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel and implementing the right of refugees to return to their homes as stipulated under UN resolution 194.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2011/veolia-losse-7777>

<sup>2</sup> <http://coalitioncontreagrexco.net/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.indymedia.org.uk/en/actions/2008/carmelagrexco/>, <http://www.stopagrexcoitalia.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bdsmovement.net/2011/european-forum-against-agrexco-declaration-7656>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>