

NBI #19

2024 FORM FOR NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

NBI Name Divestment For Peace and Justice			Date and Time April 22, 2024 (4:23pm)
Delegate Making the Motion Colin Green	Cell	Email	Association Represented or Retired New Bedford Educators Association
Delegate Seconding the Motion Josia Gertz DeChiara	Cell	Email	Association Represented or Retired Cambridge Education Association

According to the MTA Standing/Special Rules:
With the exception of items on the agenda, all substantive motions shall be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer.

MOTION

MOVED:

The Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) shall divest all MTA staff pension funds and other investments from businesses that provide arms or other forms of military assistance to the state of Israel. The MTA shall likewise demand that the Pension Reserves Investment Management (PRIM) Board divest all pension funds from those businesses that provide arms or other forms of military assistance to the state of Israel.

SUBMITTER’S RATIONALE:

In January 2024, The International Court of Justice deemed claims about a Genocide in Gaza to be “plausible,” ordering the state of Israel to take “immediate and effective measures” to stop. Divestment from those companies profiting off the sale of weapons Israel uses in Palestine is one means for upholding the ICJ’s ruling. In the past six months, over 33 thousand Palestinians (at least 19 thousand women and children) have been killed in Gaza; over 400 people have been murdered in the West Bank; and thousands more are missing and presumed dead under rubble. In addition, 400 schools, 12 universities, and 24 hospitals in Gaza have been destroyed. More than 1 million people in Gaza are at “catastrophe levels of famine” according to a World Food Programme report from March 2024.

Accordingly, no fewer than 28 Palestinian labor unions, including the General Union of Palestinian Teachers, the General Union of Kindergarten Workers, and the Federation of Unions of Palestinian Universities Professors & Employees have issued a call for international trade unionists “To take action against complicit companies involved in implementing Israel’s brutal and illegal siege, especially if they have contracts with your institution.”

Heeding this urgent call from our international union siblings aligns with the MTA’s stated commitment “to human and civil rights and ... quality public education in an environment in which lifelong learning and innovation flourish.” It also recalls the precedent of the Mass Divest coalition, when the MTA joined with other labor and community groups to successfully pass legislation in 1982 divesting the Commonwealth of Massachusetts from companies that did business in apartheid South Africa.

Successful passage of this motion reasserts the MTA’s position within a global labor movement taking material action for sustained peace, which includes (among others): United Auto Workers Locals 551 and 2320, the Stanford Graduate Workers Union (SGWU-UE), Canada’s Unions of Public Employees (CUPE) and Postal Workers (CUPW), the UK’s General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU), Brazil’s Central Única dos Trabalhadores (CUT), the Central Trade Union Council of India (AICCTU), the Irish Trade Union Congress, and the General Industries Workers Union in South Africa.

DUES IMPACT: \$0

SUBMITTER’S COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE:

MTA COST & STAFF TIME ESTIMATE **(For MTA use only):**

MTA Cost Estimate: \$10,000
MTA Staff Time Estimate: 20 hours