

# **AXA must comply with international law and break with Israel's colonial, apartheid policy!**

70 french organizations, associations, parties and unions have published a call to AXA to respect international law and cut ties with Israel's colonial and apartheid policy.

AXA is a shareholder of three Israeli banks: Hapoalim, Leumi and Mizrahi Tefahot.

A report by the Israeli research group « Who Profits » found that all Israeli banks are implicated in the financial infrastructure that allows companies, government agencies and individuals to participate in the colonization of Palestine and perpetuation of the occupation.

Through its subsidiary, AB, AXA maintains investments in Elbit Systems, a major Israeli weapons manufacturer accused of providing the illegal white phosphorus containing shells used by the Israeli army against civilians in Gaza.

In an appeal published on 28 july 2017, the above mentioned groups called on AXA to put an end to its controversial partnerships and cease profiting from the occupation and colonization of the Palestinian people.

The signatories of this communiqué point out that international citizen engagement has forced companies such as Veolia and Orange to halt their involvement in Israeli colonization and that pension funds such as PGGM in the Netherlands, FDC in Luxemburg and Danske Bank in Denmark have all divested from Israeli banks due to their involvement with Israeli settlements.

Read the full statement below:

**AXA must comply with international law and break with Israel's colonial, apartheid policy!**

Article 4.1 of AXA's Professional Code of Ethics, adopted in 2011, commits to respecting the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact, which is based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and concerns human rights, labor, the environment and the fight against corruption. In particular, it states that "companies should promote and respect internationally recognized human rights and should not be complicit in violations of fundamental rights."

In its June 2014 "recommendations" to French companies, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that any "economic activity which takes place within Israeli settlements, or that benefits the settlements, carries legal and economic risks given that Israeli colonies are, according to international law, built on occupied land and are not recognized as part of Israel's territory. Activity linked to the purchase of or investment in land, water, and mineral or other natural resources is likely to result in legal action, as well as reputational risk."

The United Nation's guiding principles for businesses and human rights requires companies across the globe to exercise due diligence in limiting the potential negative impacts of their activities on human rights. These principles apply to businesses and financial institutions, and their supply chains, located anywhere in the world.

AXA's commitment to respecting the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact rings hollow as long as it continues to profit from the oppression of the Palestinian people and the ongoing occupation of Palestinian lands.

– AXA is a shareholder of three Israeli banks, Hapoalim, Leumi and Mizrahi Tefahot Bank, involved with settler colonization. A [report](#) by the Israeli research centre, Who Profits, documented that all Israeli banks are involved in providing financial infrastructure for all the activities

companies, Israeli governmental agencies and individuals linked to the continuation of the occupation.

– Through its subsidiary AB, AXA maintains investments in Elbit Systems, one of Israel’s leading military and homeland security companies.

– Elbit produces 85% of drones used by the Israeli military. In fact, Elbit markets its equipment by emphasizing that they have been “field tested”, in other words they are tested on Palestinian bodies. Elbit’s Hermes drones and the 7.5 Skylark mini-drone were used during Israel’s successive attacks on the besieged Gaza Strip. A [United Nation](#) report into Israel’s 2014 attack on Gaza, where more than 2,191 Palestinian civilians were killed, suggests that Israel’s actions could amount to war crimes under international law.

- Elbit supplies electronic equipment for the apartheid Wall in the occupied West Bank, deemed illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004.
- Elbit manufactures white phosphorous, and is accused of having used it against the civilian population of Gaza.

By investing in these companies and banks AXA is complicit in perpetuating decades of Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights and international law, in direct contradiction with its own guidelines and international directives.

The response by AXA’s president, at its latest Shareholders’ Meeting, was to affirm that Elbit Systems “does not fall within the framework of its exclusion policy for responsible investments.”

It is important to recall that companies such as Veolia and Orange were forced to abandon their involvement in Israeli settler colonization due to international citizen pressure. At the same time, pension funds such as PGGM in the Netherlands, FDC in Luxembourg and Danske in Denmark have divested from Israeli banks on account of their support for Israeli settlements. In 2009 the Norwegian pension fund divested from Elbit systems due to the company's involvement in Israel's apartheid Wall.

For all of the above stated reasons, we call on AXA to divest from any involvement and activity that legitimizes the violations of international law perpetrated by the state of Israel.

\*<http://bfmbusiness.bfmtv.com/entreprise/axa-et-quatre-banques-francaises-financent-la-colonisation-israelienne-1131549.html>

\*\*<https://whoprofits.org/content/financing-land-grab-direct-involvement-israeli-banks-israeli-settlement-enterprise>

\*\*\*<https://corporatewatch.org/company-profiles/elbit> – <http://investigate.afsc.org/company/elbit-systems-ltd>

List of signatories :

Abna Palestine

AFPS Argenteuil

AFPS Nord – Pas de Calais

AFPS Saint – Etienne

AFPS Rouen

AFPS 33

Association « Al-Qalam »

Anciens appelés en Algérie et leurs Amis Contre la Guerre

Association de Palestiniens en Ile de France

Association des Travailleurs Maghrébins de France (ATMF)

Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP)

Association France Palestine Solidarité 63

Association France Palestine solidarité Paris-Sud

Association Nationale des Communistes (ANC)

ATTAC 38

ATTAC FRANCE

BDS France

BDS 42

BDS France Marseille

BDS France Paris

BDS Xiberoa

BDSF 34

CCIPPP34

Centre d'Information Inter-Peuples

CGT-INRA

Collectif 69 de soutien au peuple palestinien

Collectif BDS 57

Collectif communiste Porex

Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Palestine (CJACP)

Collectif Palestine 12 – Millau

Comité Caladois Action Solidarité

Comité France Palestine de Gennevilliers

Comité Palestine 81  
Comité Palestine 94 Nord  
Comité Solidarité Palestine Région Nazairienne  
Confédération Nationale du Travail (CNT)  
Coordination BDS 37  
Corsica Palestina  
Couserans-Palestine (09)  
CVPR-PO  
Droit Solidarité  
Emancipation Tendence intersyndicale  
Ensemble !  
Forum Palestine Citoyenneté  
FTCR  
International Jewish Antizionist Network (IJAN)  
Initiatives de Paix  
Initiatives Pour un Autre Monde (IPAM)  
Jeunes Communistes du 42  
Les Désobéissants  
LGBT pour la Palestine  
Mouvement des Jeunes Communistes du Val de Marne  
Mouvement Jeunes Communistes du Bas-Rhin  
Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (MAN)  
Mouvement pour une Alternative Non-violente (MAN)  
Montpellier  
Nouveau Parti Anti-Capitaliste (NPA)  
NPA 09  
NPA Tarn  
Palestine 13 – Marseille

PAS38 -UDAS (Union des Alternatives Syndicales)

Réseaux citoyens de Saint-Etienne

Rouge Vifs 13

Solidaires (Union Syndicale)

Sortir du Colonialisme

SUD Santé Sociaux

Sud solidaires 09

Survie

Union Départementale CGT 13

Union Juive Française pour la Paix

Association internationale de techniciens, experts et chercheurs (AITEC)

Union Juive Française pour la Paix section de lyon

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