

Dear

Israeli settlement products

[If you don't already have a relationship with the company/person you are writing to, insert short paragraph or sentence explaining that you are/your organisation is an investor.]

I am/we are writing to you about *[name of company]*'s position, policies and procedures in relation to the sourcing and sale of products originating in Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian Territories.

[For companies that sell settlement products]

I/we understand that *[name of company]* stores sell a number of settlement goods. I/we wish to express concern about this and to urge *[name of company]* to review this practice with a view to stopping it. I/we would like to know whether your company has any plans to review its policy in this respect.

[For companies whose policies/practices are unknown]

I/we would like to know whether or not *[name of company]* sells settlement goods in its stores.

Settlements are Israeli civilian areas situated in Palestinian territories including the West Bank and East Jerusalem currently under Israeli occupation. They are illegal under international law, specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention, which states that an occupying power should not 'deport or transfer parts of its own population into the territory it occupies'.

Settlements have been severely criticised by the United Nations and by numerous governments including those of the UK and Ireland. Their presence is seen as a barrier to the 'two state solution' to the conflict that both Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) have committed to work towards. Furthermore, numerous UN and human rights organisations' reports document how the presence of the settlements and their associated infrastructure fragment the West Bank and severely restrict the movement of Palestinians, hampering everyday life and creating major barriers to Palestinian economic development.

You will probably be aware that a number of churches and NGOs are concerned that a range of settlement-produced goods including fruit and vegetables are sold in the UK and Ireland. These groups argue that retailers that sell settlement products are supporting settlement economies and therefore indirectly helping to perpetuate the conflict.

I/we consider that as well as the concerns outlined above, there are also potential risks attached to the sale of goods produced in entities considered illegal by the vast majority of the international community.

In light of the increasing publicity surrounding this issue, I/we believe that it is likely that many consumers will choose not to buy these goods. You may be aware that a group of British lawyers have recently released legal advice stating that UK retailers whose labelling of food products originating in the settlements is unclear could be at risk of prosecution for potentially misleading consumers.

I/we also understand that for various reasons to do with the interconnectedness of the Israeli and settlement economies - and, according to some reports, the deliberate mislabelling of settlement goods by exporters - there can be a problem differentiating between goods produced in settlements and those produced legitimately within Israel's internationally recognised pre-1967 borders (to which our concerns do not apply). This has led to incidences of settlement goods unlawfully taking advantage of the trade preference granted to Israeli exports to the EU.

[For companies that sell settlement products]

Some retailers have recently decided to stop sourcing settlement goods. In light of all the above, I/we consider that a review of [name of company]'s policy and practice on this issue would be timely - including an assessment of your mechanisms to enable you to differentiate between settlement and Israeli goods. It would also help to demonstrate support for international law and human rights in line with [name of company]'s existing corporate responsibility commitments. [You may wish to refer to these commitments in more depth.]

[For companies whose policies/practices are unknown]

If [name of company] does stock settlement goods I/we would like to know what these products are and how they are labelled so that consumers can identify them when shopping. Whether or not settlement goods are stocked, I/we would also like to know what tracing systems you have to enable [name of company] to differentiate between goods produced in settlements and those produced within Israel proper when making purchasing decisions.

[For companies that do not sell settlement goods – insert after paragraph 1]

I understand that [name of company] has adopted a policy not to stock settlement goods.

As you will know, the settlements are illegal under international law, cause suffering for Palestinian communities and are an obstacle to peace in the region. I/we consider that trade in settlement goods, which arguably supports settlement economies, is a matter for considerable moral concern. I/we also believe that there are potential risks attached to the sale of goods produced in the settlements.

I/we therefore consider that [name of company]'s decision not to sell settlement goods is to be commended and would like to record my/our support for this policy.

Yours sincerely