



BROWN UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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Sally Hunt
Joint General Secretary
University and College Union
Egmont House
25-31 Tavistock Place
London WC1H 9UT
United Kingdom

Dear Ms. Hunt,

The University and College Union's decision to consider support for a boycott of academic institutions in Israel has rightly aroused concern among members of the Brown University community. I have followed this issue closely and with mounting dismay.

Institutions of higher learning go to extraordinary lengths to defend the free flow of information, the unfettered exchange of ideas, and the primacy of well-reasoned argument. Defending these fundamental principles is not merely a matter for debate. Without those principles in place, the academy cannot exist.

A boycott of the sort your organization is considering – a measure that attempts to silence or marginalize the scholars of an entire nation – is inimical to those fundamental principles and could do great harm to colleges and universities. Supporting such a boycott of scholars from Israel or any other part of the world is not an option for people who are dedicated to the core principles of the academy.

As president of Brown University, I write to inform you that we strongly support Israeli universities and will assist them in efforts to protect scholars from political pressure of the kind the forthcoming debate intends.

Sincerely,

Ruth J. Simmons