

BDS activists take to streets to call for Puma boycott, denounce Israeli occupation



Ramallah, October 28 (RHC)-- The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel has mobilized activists in 20 countries calling for a boycott of German sportswear manufacturer Puma due to its sponsorship of the Israel Football Association (IFA).

Human rights activists and sports fans were called to demonstrate at Puma retail outlets, offices and matches of Puma-sponsored teams over the weekend. Images circulating in social media consequently showed protesters and athletes taking part in the protest in various countries, including the United States, Ireland, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Germany, Holland, Austria, Italia, Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

Among the various events was a pro-Palestine solidarity football match organized by the USIM and UniSZA universities in Terengganu, Malaysia.

Users on social media also expressed solidarity with the boycott movement, posting images of Puma clothing, shoes and bags with "Boycott" written over them.

Last week, advertisements regarding the "Boycott Puma" movement also appeared in subway cars in Britain's capital city of London, describing the sportswear company as a "proud sponsor of Israeli apartheid." London's transport managing body, Transport for London (TfL), vowed to "immediately" remove the posters shortly later, however.

The October 26 protests mark a second wave of international boycott protests against Puma following an earlier global day of action in June.

The BDS movement's official website claims that Adidas' decision followed "an international campaign and the delivery of over 16,000 signatures to Adidas headquarters."

Writing for Arab broadcaster Al Jazeera on Sunday, female Palestinian football player Aya Khattab voiced her support for the #BoycottPuma movement. "We are constantly subjected to humiliating searches at military checkpoints when we travel for training sessions or events. Our matches get interrupted and raided by armed soldiers. Our pitches get swallowed by ever-expanding illegal settlements and our stadiums destroyed by Israeli bombs," she wrote.

"That is why we expect the rest of the world, and especially sport institutions and companies, to be aware of our pain and to support us. That is why we reject attempts by sport brands and companies to whitewash Israel's occupation," Khattab added.

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