

# *French Company Boycott Infuriates Israeli Prime Minister*

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Tel Aviv, June 5 (RHC)-- A recent decision by France's telecom giant "Orange" to withdraw its brand from Israel has raised the ire of Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu. An angry Netanyahu on Thursday called on the French government to "distance itself publicly from the miserable statement and the miserable action of a company that is partially owned by the government of France."

The remarks come a day after Orange's chairman, Stephane Richard, announced he would withdraw from Israel "tomorrow morning" if he could. The French government has a quarter stake in the company.

Orange has been under pressure to end its relationship with Partner, Israel's mobile service provider, over its supply of services to Israeli settlements regarded as illegal under international law. The developments come as international campaign to increase economic and political pressure on Israel through boycotts is gaining momentum and isolating the Israeli regime.

Several Western organizations, rights groups, academic institutions and business companies have announced their intention to cut ties with Israel. In late March, a Canadian advocacy organization known as the Canadian Quakers defied the Ottawa government's warning not to promote boycotts against Israel. Members of the Canadian Friends Service Committee reaffirmed their support for the pro-Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against the Israeli regime over aggressive policies and expansionist agenda.

The BDS, which began in July 2005 by 171 Palestinian organizations, has been turned into a global campaign. The BDS movement against Israel calls for “various forms of boycott against Israel until it meets its obligations under international law.”

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