

ACURM members,

Brown-RISD Hillel is an independent, non-profit corporation, structurally distinct from Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design. We aspire to enable a flourishing Jewish community on the Brown and RISD campuses, foster the aspiration for Brown and RISD students to build Jewish lives and families and develop leaders who will sustain the American and World Jewish community in coming decades. Our mission is religious, pastoral, educational, cultural and social rather than political.

Like the overwhelming majority of American Jewry, we are proudly Zionist — we support the existence of a secure, democratic, Jewish state in the historical land of Israel. Given millennia of violent, sometimes murderous antisemitism, Israel has been and must continue to be a haven for the Jewish people. It welcomed 800,000 Jews fleeing pogroms in Arab states in the 1940s. It provided a home for refuseniks fleeing persecution in the Soviet Union through the 1970s and 1980s. And it rescued thousands of endangered Ethiopian Jews in the 1990s. Given the antisemitic bile being spewn in the streets of Europe, nobody can say Israel's place as refuge for the world's Jews will be irrelevant in the future.

We take our commitment to Brown's Jewish community and Brown's responsibility for maintaining an environment conducive to learning for all its students very seriously. We note with grave concern many actions undertaken by divestment supporters — ostracizing Jewish students for supporting Israel's right to exist, posting their celebration of terrorism on sidechat, blocking Jewish students from entering the Blue Room and baselessly chanting at President Christina Paxson that she supports genocide.

We ask that ACURM consider a few questions as it formulates its advice to the corporation.

- Hamas leaders have asked American university students to demand their institutions ostracize Israel. Would divestment represent a tacit endorsement of a totalitarian, theocratic regime with values diametrically opposed to Brown's own?
- BDC-affiliated groups have refused to criticize Hamas, its terrorist attack on October 7 or its call for destruction of the Jewish state in any of their publications or protests. Does this not represent implicit support for Hamas and its antisemitic ideology?
- BDC affiliated groups have engaged in disruptive, abusive and illegal actions to extort the university into giving them a hearing. Why wouldn't divestment lead to

a coarser and uglier university, in which political groups use extreme measures to pursue their objectives?

- In their presentation to ACURM, BDC expressed their support for a single binational state, yet Hamas has made it very clear that it wants to expel all non-Muslims from Israel. What evidence can BDC offer that elimination of Israel as a Jewish state wouldn't lead to the genocide and ethnic cleansing of the world's largest Jewish community?
- What Israeli response to the October 7 massacre would have been acceptable to BDC? Hamas has promised to repeat the murders and kidnappings of October 7 again and again. Why should Israel allow this to happen to its citizens, Jewish and Arab alike?
- BDC's objection to American and European companies which sell products that help Israel provide security for its people ignores the objective benefit they provide. Should Raytheon have refused to support Israel's Iron Dome system that has saved countless lives when Hamas and Hezbollah fired missiles into civilian areas? Should Motorola refuse to sell Israel the equipment that helps Israel disrupt terrorist attacks on civilians? Would BDC prefer that Hamas and Hezbollah have free reign to murder Israeli civilians of all religions?
- BDC's conclusory accusations of Israeli of "apartheid," "murder," "genocide" and "ethnic cleansing" are contradicted by dozens of senior American military officers (many expert in urban warfare) who have praised the IDF's exceptional care in avoiding civilian casualties, even in the face of Hamas use of Gaza's civilians as human shields and military facilities built under civilian centers. Isn't BDC engaging in a perversion of the English language? Aren't they insulting the memory of victims of actual genocides, among them Americans, in the Shoah and in Rwanda?
- BDC is silent about other conflicts in the region, including many where Muslim-dominated states have murdered their subjects by the thousand. All the companies BDC mentions do business with countries far less scrupulous about human rights than Israel. Why isn't holding the world's only Jewish state to a double standard antisemitic?

We hope these questions are helpful to you in your deliberations. You have an important charge and we are sure you will address it thoughtfully.

Respectfully,
Bob Boiarsky '77 P'19
President of the Brown-RISD Hillel Board of Trustees
On behalf of the Board