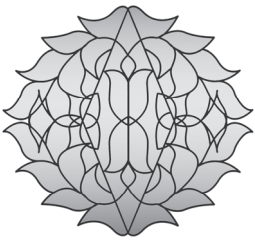


**Middle
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MESA '09

21 May 2009

Professor Zvi Galil
President
Tel Aviv University
Tel Aviv, Israel

via fax +972-2-6422379

Dear Professor Galil:

On behalf of the Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association of North America, I am writing to you to express our strong support for your letter of May 3, 2009 regarding Omar Barghouti, a Tel Aviv University master's student of philosophy.

MESA was founded in 1966 to promote scholarship and teaching on the Middle East and North Africa. The preeminent organization in the field, the Association publishes the International Journal of Middle East Studies and has more than 3000 members worldwide. MESA is committed to ensuring academic freedom and freedom of expression, both within the region and in connection with the study of the region in North America and elsewhere.

Generally, the Committee's work consists of highlighting threats and infringements on academic freedom. When we write to university or government officials in North America or the Middle East, it is usually to express concern or dismay. It is a pleasure in this case to write expressing commendation. Your letter regarding Mr. Barghouti, a student leading a campaign to boycott Israeli universities, is an admirably succinct and eloquent statement of the principle of academic freedom. We are happy to endorse it, all the more because you took this position even though the campaign in question would target your university among others.

Respectfully,

Virginia H. Aksan
MESA President
Professor of History, McMaster University