Resolution

Whereas, Palestinian civil society issued a call in 2005 for boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel; and

Whereas, Members of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) have organized various forums for discussion and debate of that call through MESA’s commitment to academic freedom; and

Whereas, International intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including Palestinian and Israeli monitoring groups, have documented and verified successive Israeli governments’ systematic violations of the human rights of Palestinians living under Israeli direct or indirect control; and

Whereas, Systematic violations include restricting freedom of movement for Palestinians; isolating, undermining, or otherwise attacking Palestinian educational institutions; harassing Palestinian professors, teachers, and students; harassing Israeli professors and students criticizing Israeli policies; destroying, confiscating, or otherwise rendering Palestinian archival material inaccessible; and maintaining inequality in educational resources between Palestinians and Israelis; and

Whereas, Israeli universities are imbricated in these systematic violations through their provision of direct assistance to the Israeli military and intelligence establishments; and

Whereas, The United States government has systematically shielded successive Israeli governments from being held accountable for such violations and facilitated them through unprecedented diplomatic, military, and economic support; and

Whereas, Recalling that the BDS campaign against Israel is one that targets institutions and not individuals; and

Whereas, Recalling that MESA recognizes the right of scholars to academic freedom as well as the right of scholars to choose whether or not to participate in an academic boycott; be it

Resolved, That the majority of the MESA membership:
1) Endorses the 2005 call of Palestinian civil society for BDS against Israel; and
2) Directs the MESA Board of Directors to work in consultation with the Committee of Academic Freedom to give effect to the spirit and intent of this resolution, in a manner consistent with MESA’s bylaws as well as relevant US federal, state, and local laws.