



**Middle
East
Studies
Association**
of North America, Inc.

1219 N Santa Rita Ave
The University of Arizona
Tucson AZ 85721 USA

520 621-5850
520 626-9095 fax
secretariat@mesana.org
www.mesana.org

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Contact

Geoffrey Knox at 917-414-1749 or gknox@geoffreyknox.com

**Members of the Middle East Studies Association Pass
Resolution that Calls for Protection of Free Discussion on
Academic Boycott of Israel**

Members of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) have completed voting on a resolution proposed at the MESA 2014 Annual Meeting regarding academic freedom and discussion of academic boycotts of Israel. Of MESA's 1,785 current Full Members who were eligible to vote, 561 voted for the resolution and 152 voted against the resolution. The association's by-laws require a simple majority vote on such resolutions and, therefore, the 2014 resolution has passed.

The MESA members' resolution [<http://mesana.org/about/resolutions.html>] does not take a position on an academic boycott of Israel but instead urges the association to remain an open forum on academic boycotts and affirms the academic freedom and right of MESA members to engage in open discussion of the movement for boycott, divestments or sanction (BDS) of Israel. The resolution also urges "MESA program committees to organize discussions at MESA annual meetings, and the MESA Board of Directors to create opportunities over the course of the year [2015] that provide platforms for a sustained discussion of the academic boycott and foster careful consideration of an appropriate position for MESA to assume."

Nathan Brown, Chair of MESA's Board of Directors and President of the association, commented on the passage of the resolution: "As president, I will ensure that this year's program committee acts upon the resolution in accordance with its mandate. The Board of Directors will also discuss how to act upon the resolution and fulfill MESA's task as facilitating dialogue among its members. I view it as the leadership's task to devise mechanisms for members to be able to argue, learn, persuade, and be persuaded even on the most divisive and emotional issues in a respectful atmosphere free from intimidation."

MESA

The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) is a private, non-profit, non-political learned society that fosters the study of the Middle East, promotes high standards of scholarship and teaching, and encourages public understanding of the region and its peoples through programs, publications and services that enhance education, further intellectual exchange, recognize professional distinction, and defend academic freedom.