

## **A CONDEMNATION OF BRITISH TEACHERS' UNION CALL TO BOYCOTT ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOLARS**

We, the undersigned, condemn the decision of the British National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education to call for a boycott of Israeli universities and scholars who do not publicly oppose specific governmental policies. The boycott is an egregious assault on academic freedom and scholarly collaboration. Academics have an obligation to support the free exchange of ideas and to participate in international dialogue, not to shun discourse and restrain freedom of expression. Israeli universities are a vital source of the robust discussion and critical evaluation of governmental policy that characterize Israeli society. It is indeed ironic and offensive, in a world where many governments muzzle their faculties and academic freedom is rare, that NATFHE should focus solely on Israeli universities, which have maintained academic freedom and diverse student and faculty communities under difficult circumstances. It is also distressing that in a world where, sadly, war and the killing of civilians are far too common, only one country is singled out for ostracism.

We stand in solidarity with Israeli academics and are confident that the NATFHE boycott will be understood internationally to reflect less upon the reality of Israeli universities than upon the politicization of certain leaders of the British academic community. We call on academics throughout the world to condemn the NATFHE boycott and reject the union's political exploitation of the Middle East crisis for narrow political ends.

### **SIGNED**

American Academy for Jewish Research  
Association for Jewish Studies  
Australian Association of Jewish Studies  
Australian Jewish Historical Society  
The Executive Board of the Renaissance Society of America