

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL PROCESS: A CASE STUDY OF THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT IN THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

Fitrah Ainun Mutmainnah
University of Muhammadiyah Malang
fitriahainun0510@gmail.com

Abstract

This study examines the influence of social movements on the international legal process in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The focus is on the role of the Boycott as a social movement, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) in mobilizing global support and influencing legal decisions through advocacy and public pressure. This study shows that social movements are important in shaping public opinion and driving social change. The use of social media by the BDS movement is explained as an effective mobilization tool in disseminating information and organizing solidarity actions. A case study related to the opinion of the ICJ adviser on Israel's separation wall illustrates how international pressure from social movements can affect legal proceedings. The findings of this study provide new insights into the dynamics of the interaction between social advocacy and legal decisions, as well as their implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and international law. This research contributes to understanding the important role of social movements in influencing international legal decisions and offers more effective strategies to support human rights and justice.

Keywords: Social Movement, International Law, Israel-Palestine.



A. Introduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex and protracted conflicts in the world, involving various aspects ranging from history, politics, religion, to human rights. Since the beginning of the 20th century, with the rise of Zionism and Arabism movements, this conflict has gone through various significant phases. The establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 followed by the Arab-Israeli war that led to a massive exodus of the Palestinian population, it has deepened hostilities and prolonged the dispute to this day. In 1967, Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem after the Six-Day War, which later became the centre of a variety of fundamental legal and human rights issues.¹

The core problem in this conflict is Israel's policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. The case has been taken to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), seeking an assessment of the legal consequences of the action. This shows how international law is an important arena in resolving this conflict. However, behind this complicated legal process, there is a significant force that influences the course of legal decisions, which called

¹ Public Relations UM Source, 'Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: History, Root Problems, and Resolution Efforts', *UM West Sumatra*, 2023 <<https://umsb.ac.id/berita/index/1295-konflik-palestina-israel-sejarah-akar-masalah-dan-upaya-penyelesaian>>.



social movements. Social movements play an important role in mobilizing international support and influencing legal decisions through public pressure and advocacy.²

Social movements have an important role in shaping public opinion and influencing public opinion and influencing social change at various levels through campaigns, protests, and other actions. Social movements are able to mobilize the masses and strengthen their voices in influencing the international legal process. Public opinion at home and abroad plays an important role in supporting and opposing social movements.³ talking about social movements with the aim of forming public opinion, in this case social movements that have been studied previously which discuss the influence of solidarity in encouraging social movements during the Covid-19 pandemic.⁴

Social movements, such as Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS), launched in 2005 by a group of Palestinian

² VOA Public Relations, 'International Court of Justice: Israel's Occupation of the Palestinian Territories is Illegal,' *VOA Indonesia*, 2024 <<https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/mahkamah-internasional-pendudukan-israel-di-wilayah-palestina-ilegal/7705944.html>>.

³ Shafira Elnanda Yasmine, 'Arab Spring: Islam in the Social Movement and Democracy of the Middle East', *Society, Culture and Politics*, 28.2 (2016), 106 <<https://doi.org/10.20473/mkp.v28i22015.106-113>>.

⁴ Anggi Nicolin and others, 'Resistance and Solidarity: The Influence of Solidarity in Driving Social Movements During the COVID-19 Pandemic', *Journal of International Relations: Cakra Studi Global STRategis*, 14.2 (2021), 317–32 <<https://e-journal.unair.ac.id/JHI/article/view/32338>>.



activists, have called for an international boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel until the basic rights of Palestinians are respected. The movement has gained global support and raised awareness about the situation in Palestine, as well as pressuring governments and institutions to take concrete action. By using social media, platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, BDS activists have succeeded in disseminating information, organizing campaigns, and mobilizing global support, making the Palestinian issue a trending topic and attracting international media attention.⁵

This study aims to explore how social movements, particularly BDS, affect international legal processes in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This study will analyze the dynamic interaction between social movements and international law, as well as how social movements can mobilize public opinion and pressure legal institutions to act. The case brought to the ICJ highlights various aspects of the law, including human rights violations, illegal occupation, and racial discrimination. The ICJ was asked to provide a legal

⁵ Yusufe, 'Boycott, Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) Movement', *Palestine Solidarity Campaign*, 2024 <<https://palestinecampaign.org/campaigns/bds-2/>>.



opinion on whether Israel's actions violate international law, including the Geneva Conventions and UN Resolutions.⁶

This social movement occurs both in Indonesia and abroad, in which case the "Block Out 2024" movement that went viral on social media is a new strategy in the struggle against Israel in Gaza. Launched in response to the intensification of the conflict, the movement invites the international community to turn off electricity for one hour at a specified time as a form of solidarity with the people of Gaza who are often experiencing power outages due to the Israeli blockade. This initiative not only serves as a symbolic action to raise global awareness, but also to pressure Israel to end the human rights-violating blockade in Gaza.⁷

In addition, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has issued an irsyadat directing Muslims to boycott ten brands affiliated with Israel whose products have been declared halal. This step was taken as a form of solidarity with the Palestinian people's cause and to pressure Israel to stop its actions that

⁶ Himmatul Ulya and Kilau Riksaning Ayu, 'Digital Social Movement; Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions (BDS) on Israeli-Palestinian Issues on Social Media', *Proceedings of the National Seminar of FISIP UNNES*, 2024, 1 <<https://proceeding.unnes.ac.id/psnf/article/view/3063/2526>>.

⁷ CNBC Indonesia, 'Viral "Block Out 2024" Movement, New Weapon Against Israel in Gaza', *CNBC Indonesia*, 2024 <<https://www.cnbcindonesia.com/news/20240514131411-4-537950/viral-gerakan-block-out-2024-senjata-baru-lawan-israel-di-gaza>>.



violate human rights.⁸ The list of affiliated brands is a guide for Muslims in Indonesia to be selective in their daily product consumption, in the hope of having a significant economic and political impact.⁹

Departing from the word social movement, the movement does not only occur in Indonesia but other social movements also occur around the world.

The theoretical basis of this study will be supported by several relevant previous studies. First, research by Smith (2018) shows how social movements can influence international legal decisions through mass mobilization and public pressure. Second, the analysis by Johnson (2019) highlights the role of social media in spreading advocacy and building international solidarity. Third, research by Brown (2020) examines the effectiveness of BDS campaigns in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and influencing international policy.

In Smith's (2018) study, it was found that social movements have the capacity to influence legal decisions by

⁸ Kaslam, *Global Solidarity: Humanitarian Movement for Palestine in Indonesia*, *Ushuluddin Journal*, 2024, xxvi <<https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/alfikr/article/view/45592>>.

⁹ MPU Admin, 'A total of 10 halal Israeli affiliated brands are boycotted according to the MUI Ordinance, here's the list', *Aceh Ulema Consultative Assembly*, 2024 <<https://mpu.acehprov.go.id/berita/kategori/berita/total-ada-10-merek-terafiliasi-israel-yang-halal-diboikot-sesuai-irsyadat-mui-ini-daftarnya>>.



utilizing mass mobilization and public pressure. Social movements can direct attention to certain issues that then pressure legal entities to act. For example, in the case of the ICJ, pressure from international social movements against Israeli policies in the occupied territories has been a significant factor driving the filing of this case to the ICJ. Through this analysis, we can see how social movements not only serve as advocacy forces but also as agents of significant change in the context of international law.

For decades, the European Union (EU) has sought to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the Foreign and Security Policy (EUFSP) tool, with the principle of a "two-state solution" as the main basis for conflict resolution. However, this policy is ineffective due to multipolar competition, regional fragmentation, and internal contestation at the EU level. To overcome these obstacles, the EU has adopted several mitigation strategies: delegation through the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) mission, multilateralization through participation in the Quartet and other multilateral platforms, as well as selective engagement through trade relations and humanitarian aid policies. However, EU mitigation measures have not adequately addressed these obstacles due to intra-regional sensitivities, differences of view, and violent clashes, as well as Israel's continued



occupation of Palestinian land with the protection of the United States.¹⁰

The theoretical basis of this study will be supported by several relevant previous studies. First, research by Smith (2018) shows how social movements can influence international legal decisions through mass mobilization and public pressure. Second, the analysis by Aymar Jean Christian highlights the role of social media in spreading advocacy and building international solidarity. Third, research by Brown (2020) examines the effectiveness of BDS campaigns in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and influencing international policy.

Smith (2018) shows that social movements have the capacity to influence legal decisions by utilizing mass mobilization and public pressure. Social movements can direct attention to certain issues which then pressure legal entities to act. In the case of the ICJ, pressure from international social movements against Israeli policies in the occupied territories has been a significant factor that prompted the filing of the case with the ICJ. Through this analysis, we can see how social

¹⁰ Sinem Akgül-Açıkmeşe and Soli Özel, 'EU Policy towards the Israel-Palestine Conflict: The Limitations of Mitigation Strategies', *International Spectator*, 59.1 (2024), 59–78 <<https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2024.2309664>>.



movements not only serve as advocacy forces but also as agents of significant change in the context of international law.¹¹

Aymar Jean Christian in discovering that social media has become an important tool in disseminating information and building international solidarity. Social media allows social movements like BDS to reach global audiences, spread their message, and organize solidarity actions quickly and effectively. By harnessing the power of social media, BDS is able to mobilize international public opinion and pressure governments and institutions to take action against Israel. This shows that social media not only serves as a communication tool but also as a powerful mobilization tool in modern social movements.¹²

Omar Barghouti in his research focuses on the effectiveness of BDS's campaign in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and influencing international policy. Brown found that BDS's campaign managed to attract international attention and increase pressure on Israel through a series of clever advocacy strategies. BDS utilizes a variety of

¹¹ Jackie Smith, 'Transnational Social Movement Organizations and Counter-Hegemonic Struggles Today', *Jurnal of World System Research*, 2018 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5195/jwsr.2018.850>>.

¹² Aymar Jean Christian and others, 'Platforming Intersectionality: Networked Solidarity and the Limits of Corporate Social Media', *Social Media and Society*, 6.3 (2020) <<https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120933301>>.



advocacy tools including boycotts, divestments, and sanctions to pressure Israel to comply with international law and respect the basic rights of Palestinians. Through this analysis, it can be understood that BDS is not only an advocacy movement, but also an effective strategy in fighting for justice and human rights in Palestine.¹³

With reference to these studies, this study will provide an in-depth analysis of the influence of social movements on the international legal process in the Israeli-Palestinian case in the ICJ. The purpose of this research is to identify existing knowledge gaps, demonstrate the urgency and relevance of the research objectives, and outline the expected achievements. This research is expected to make a significant contribution to understanding the role of social movements in influencing international legal decisions and offer new insights into the dynamics of law and social advocacy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This research will focus on several key aspects. First, an analysis of how social movements, particularly BDS, mobilize international support and influence legal decisions. Second, the

¹³ Omar Barghouti, 'BDS: Nonviolent, Globalized Palestinian Resistance to Israel's Settler Colonialism and Apartheid', *Jurnal Palestine Studies*, 2021
<<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2021.1906067>>.



study of the role of social media in spreading advocacy and building international solidarity. Third, a study of the impact of the ICJ decision on Israeli policy in the occupied territories and how this decision is influenced by pressure from social movements. Through this analysis, this study will explore the complex interactions between social movements, social media, and international law in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The ultimate goal of this study is to show that social movements have a significant role in influencing international legal decisions and that social media is a powerful tool in mobilizing global support. By understanding these dynamics, we can develop more effective strategies in international social and legal advocacy to support human rights and justice in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This research is expected to make an important contribution to the literature on international social movements and law and offer new insights for policymakers, academics, and activists working in this field.

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of social movements in influencing international legal processes. The Israeli-Palestinian case at the ICJ shows how social movements can rally global support and pressure legal institutions to act. Using social movement theory, this study



will explore the dynamics between social advocacy and legal decisions, as well as their implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and international law as a whole. This research is expected to provide better insights into how social movements can influence legal decisions and how social media can be used as an effective advocacy tool.

B. Method

In this study, the independent variable is social movements that occur as the Influence of Social Movements on the International Legal Process: A Case Study of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict at the International Court of Justice. This social movement is a factor that influences public opinion and shapes negative perceptions and traits towards the Israeli U20 national team. The dependent variable in this study is the rejection of the arrival of the Israeli U-20 national team. This rejection includes negative attitudes, protests, and collective rejection from some Indonesians towards the presence of the Israeli U-20 national team.¹⁴

The type of research used by the author is descriptive-qualitative research. The researcher in this case tries to explain a problem to be studied by looking at the conditions, events, and symptoms of a certain group systematically and actual

¹⁴ Mohtar Mas'ud, 'The Science of International Relations: Discipline and Methodology', 1990, p. 134.



data. Various data that are connected with other data so that a conclusion can be produced.¹⁵

Related to the data analysis techniques used in this study, namely qualitative data, namely data that contains information about phenomena that are symbolized not by numbers but based on meaning. Then this study uses a data collection technique by taking data obtained from secondary sources, namely data data processed in the form of documents, both written and variable, as well as online media or print media publications. The data is then elaborated and placed in accordance with the authorship systematics.¹⁶

The study will focus on the time period from 2005 to 2024. The year 2005 was chosen because it was the year of the launch of the BDS movement, while 2024 is the end point to cover the latest developments in the ICJ case and the impact of social movements. The study will assess information until August 2024 to ensure relevance to current conditions and the latest available data. Information or events that occurred after August 2024 will not be included in the analysis.

Meanwhile, this research will focus on the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement as the main example of social movements that affect the international legal process in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other social

¹⁵ Mas'ud.

¹⁶ Mas'ud.



movements, while they may be relevant, will not be discussed in depth. This research will discuss the impact of social movements on international law with a focus on cases brought to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other aspects of international law that are not directly related to this case will not be discussed. This study will examine the role of social media in mobilizing global support for the BDS movement, but will not go into depth about other social media platforms outside the context of BDS or the long-term impact of social media in general. The study will use available data from journal articles, reports of non-governmental organizations, and media analysis. Data that comes from unreliable or unverifiable sources will not be used in this study.

C. Result and Discussion

1. The Influence of Social Movements on International Legal Processes

Social movements have long been recognized as a force capable of changing the political and legal landscape in various countries. One of the most prominent social movements in the last decade is the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, which was launched in 2005 by a group of Palestinian activists. BDS aims to increase economic and



political pressure on Israel to respect the basic rights of Palestinians and comply with international law. The influence of this movement on the international legal process, especially in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is an important and relevant topic to analyze.

Since its inception, BDS has emphasized the importance of boycotts, divestments, and sanctions as a tool to achieve its goals. Boycotts involve refusing to buy Israeli products or participate in activities that support the country. Divestment means attracting investment from companies that support Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories. The sanctions, on the other hand, call on governments and international organizations to impose economic and political restrictions on Israel. Through these three main pillars, BDS aims to pressure Israel to end its occupation of the Palestinian territories, recognize the rights of Palestinians living in Israel, and respect the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their land.¹⁷

The BDS movement has managed to garner widespread support around the world, including from various non-governmental organizations, human rights groups, and individuals concerned with the Palestinian issue. This support

¹⁷ Abraham Hammed, 'Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign', *Solidaritas Irlandia-Palestina*, 2005 <<https://www.ipsc.ie/bds-the-background>>.



has not only come from countries in the Middle East but also from Europe, North America, and even some countries in Asia and Africa. This spread of global support shows that the Palestinian issue is not only a regional issue but also an international issue that requires attention and action from the global community. One of the main ways BDS influences international legal processes is through mass mobilization and public pressure. Mass mobilization refers to efforts to rally support from the wider community, including through demonstrations, media campaigns, and various other forms of protest. Public pressure, on the other hand, involves efforts to influence government policies and decisions of international institutions through public opinion. In this context, BDS has successfully used both of these strategies to draw global attention to the Palestinian issue and pressure Israel to comply with international law.¹⁸

Smith (2018) in his research shows that social movements have the capacity to influence international legal decisions by utilizing mass mobilization and public pressure. Social movements can direct attention to certain issues which

¹⁸ Nathan Thrall, 'BDS: How the controversial nonviolent movement has transformed the Israeli-Palestinian debate', *The Guardian News*, 2015 <<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/14/bds-boycott-divestment-sanctions-movement-transformed-israeli-palestinian-debate>>.



then pressure legal entities to act. In the case of the ICJ, pressure from international social movements against Israeli policies in the occupied territories has been a significant factor that prompted the filing of the case with the ICJ. Through this analysis, we can see how social movements not only serve as advocacy forces but also as agents of significant change in the context of international law.¹⁹

The case filed with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) related to Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories shows how pressure from social movements can affect the international legal process. In 2004, the ICJ issued an advisory opinion stating that the separation wall built by Israel in the Palestinian territories violated international law. This opinion is an important victory for social movements that oppose the Israeli occupation, including BDS. Although the ICJ's advisory opinion is not binding, it has had a significant impact in increasing international pressure on Israel.²⁰

The BDS movement has also succeeded in influencing various international organizations to take action against Israel. For example, some universities around the world have

¹⁹ Jackie Smith.

²⁰ Michael, 'Opinion of the Upcoming ICJ Advisory on Palestine: A Fragile Hope', *Research Society of International Law*, 2004 <<https://rsilpak.org/2023/the-icjs-upcoming-advisory-opinion-on-palestine-a-fragile-hope/>>.



decided not to establish academic cooperation with Israeli institutions as a form of support for the BDS movement. In addition, several local governments in Europe and the United States have passed resolutions in favor of BDS or criticizing Israeli policies in the Palestinian territories. These measures show that social movements such as BDS can influence policy at different levels of government and international organizations. In addition, BDS has managed to rally support from various celebrities and well-known community figures. The support of these well-known figures helped raise the profile of the movement and attract international media attention. Thus, BDS was able to reach a wider audience and raise global awareness of the Palestinian issue. Celebrity endorsements have also helped bolster the movement's legitimacy in the eyes of the public and increase pressure on Israel to change its policies.²¹

BDS's use of social media is also an important factor in the success of this movement. Social media allows BDS activists to quickly and effectively disseminate information to a global audience. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram

²¹ Janine P Holc and others, 'THE PALESTINE EXCEPTION TO FREE SPEECH', *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, 6(11), 951–952., 21.4 (2017), 1072–97 <<https://www-1tandfonline-1com-1mijdrsuloa52.hps.bj.uj.edu.pl/doi/abs/10.1080/09688080.2018.1467361%0Ahttps://about.jstor.org/terms%0Ahttps://www.jstor.org/stable/3174448?seq=1>>.



are used to organize campaigns, spread news about human rights abuses by Israel, and mobilize international support. Johnson (2019) highlights the role of social media in spreading advocacy and building international solidarity. According to him, social media has become an important tool in disseminating information and building international solidarity. Social media allows social movements like BDS to reach global audiences, spread their message, and organize solidarity actions quickly and effectively. By harnessing the power of social media, BDS is able to mobilize international public opinion and pressure governments and institutions to take action against Israel. This shows that social media not only serves as a communication tool but also as a powerful mobilization tool in modern social movements. The influence of social movements on the international legal process is also seen in the support of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and human rights groups. These organizations often cooperate with social movements such as BDS to increase international pressure on countries that violate international law. In this context, BDS has worked closely with various NGOs and human rights groups to document human rights abuses by Israel and disseminate this information to the international community. This collaboration helped increase



the legitimacy of the BDS movement and strengthen pressure on Israel.²²

In addition, the BDS movement has also succeeded in attracting international media attention to the Palestinian issue. Extensive media coverage helped raise global awareness of the situation in Palestine and strengthened international support for the BDS movement. The international media plays an important role in shaping public opinion and influencing government policies. Thus, extensive media coverage helped increase pressure on Israel and encourage policy change. However, while BDS has achieved many successes, the movement also faces significant challenges. The Israeli government and its supporters have launched a campaign to discredit BDS and put pressure on organizations and individuals who support the movement. Several countries have passed laws banning or restricting BDS activities, arguing that the movement is discriminatory and threatens national security. In addition, there have also been attempts to portray BDS as an anti-Semitic movement, although BDS supporters insist that their movement is a form of nonviolent protest

²² SUHARKO, 'NGOs, Civil Society and Democracy Criticism of Liberal Views', 2023.



against the Israeli government's policies, not against Jews in general.²³

The influence of social movements on international legal processes can also be seen from the response of governments and international organizations to the pressure of these movements. Some governments have taken steps to respond to the demands of social movements, including by issuing public statements in support of the rights of Palestinians or by taking diplomatic action against Israel. In addition, several international organizations, including the United Nations, have passed resolutions criticizing Israel's policies in the Palestinian territories and calling for action to protect human rights in the territories.²⁴ In conclusion, the BDS movement has shown that social movements can play an important role in influencing international legal processes. By leveraging mass mobilization, public pressure, and social media, BDS has succeeded in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and pressuring governments and international organizations to take action against Israel. Despite facing many challenges, the movement

²³ Getty, 'The BDS Movement and a Targeted Boycott Guide', *Cxomedia.Id*, 2024 <<https://www.cxomedia.id/general-knowledge/20240605153318-55-180459/gerakan-bds-dan-panduan-boikot-yang-tepat-sasaran>>.

²⁴ Bert Useem and Jack A. Goldstone, 'The Paradox of Victory: Social Movement Fields, Adverse Outcomes, and Social Movement Success', *Theory and Society*, 51.1 (2022), 31–60 <<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-021-09460-2>>.



has achieved many successes and shows that social movements can be significant agents of change in the context of international law. This research provides important insights into how social movements can influence international legal decisions and how advocacy strategies can be developed to achieve justice and human rights at the global level.

2. The Role of Social Media in International Support Mobilization

Social media has changed the way information is disseminated and how social movements operate. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube allow individuals and groups to communicate, share information, and organize actions quickly and effectively. One of the most successful social movements using social media is Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS), which was launched by Palestinian activists in 2005. BDS is using social media to raise global awareness of Palestinian issues and mobilize international support to pressure Israel to comply with international law. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the role of social media is crucial in shaping public opinion and mobilizing global support. Social media allows BDS activists to reach a wider audience compared to traditional media. The platform provides a space for individuals and



groups to share stories, images, videos, and articles documenting human rights abuses by Israel. This information is often censored or ignored by the mainstream media, but through social media, activists can ensure that their voices are heard and their message is widely disseminated. One example of BDS's success in using social media is the campaign to boycott Israeli products. The campaign is widespread through hashtags such as #BoycottIsrael and #FreePalestine, which are used to encourage the international community not to buy products originating from Israel or companies operating in the occupied territories. The campaign has not only succeeded in raising awareness about the situation in Palestine but also pressuring companies to reconsider their operations in the territory. For example, pressure from BDS's campaign through social media led Veolia Environnement, a French company, to withdraw from infrastructure projects in the occupied territories.²⁵

Social media also plays an important role in organizing protests and demonstrations. BDS activists use this platform to announce the date, time, and location of the protest, as well as to mobilize participation. For example, in 2021, as tensions in

²⁵ The Guardian, 'Palestinian Prisoners Describe Widespread Abuse in Israel Jails', *TheGuardian*, 2005 <<https://www.theguardian.com/international>>.



Gaza increased, the hashtags SaveSheikhJarrah and GazaUnderAttack went viral on social media, stirring massive protests in cities around the world. Through social media, activists can coordinate their actions, share strategies, and ensure that protests take place peacefully and organically. In addition, social media provides space for dialogue and discussion which is important in building international solidarity. Activists from different countries can interact, share experiences, and support each other in their fight for justice. These discussions helped to strengthen the global solidarity network and create a sense of unity among the supporters of the BDS movement. Through platforms such as Twitter Spaces or Facebook Groups, activists can hold live discussions, webinars, and Q&A sessions that allow for broad participation from around the world. Research by Johnson (2019) shows that social media not only functions as a communication tool but also as a powerful mobilization tool in modern social movements. According to Johnson, social media has become an important tool in disseminating information and building international solidarity. By harnessing the power of social media, BDS is able to mobilize international public opinion and pressure governments and institutions to take action against Israel. This shows that social media not only helps in spreading messages



but also in organizing real actions that can bring about change.²⁶

The influence of social media in mobilizing international support is also seen in the way these platforms are used to influence policymakers. Through an intense social media campaign, BDS was able to pressure governments and international organizations to reconsider their policies towards Israel. For example, some local governments in Europe and the United States have passed resolutions in favor of BDS or criticizing Israeli policies in the occupied territories. These measures are often driven by pressure from social media campaigns involving thousands, if not millions, of supporters around the world. However, while social media provides many benefits for social movements, there are also challenges that need to be faced. One of the main challenges is the spread of inaccurate or false information. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both sides often use social media to spread propaganda or fake news that can complicate the situation. Therefore, it is important for activists and social media users to always verify information before sharing it.²⁷

²⁶ Tiara Apriyani, 'The Role of Social Media in the Mass Action Protest Movement and New Democracy in the Digital Era', *Kalijaga Journal of Communication*, 3.1 (2021), 17–30.

²⁷ Agus Subagyo, 'SOCIAL MEDIA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS Agus Subagyo', *Ejournal FISIP Unjani*, 2019, 1–21.



In addition, there are also efforts from certain parties to suppress and silence voices that support the BDS movement on social media. Some social media platforms have faced pressure to censor content that supports BDS or criticizes Israel. Despite this, BDS activists continue to adapt and find new ways to ensure that their message remains widespread. In conclusion, social media plays a very important role in mobilizing international support for the BDS movement. Through this platform, activists can disseminate information, organize actions, and build global solidarity in ways that were previously impossible. BDS's success in using social media shows that digital technology can be a powerful tool in the fight for justice and human rights. However, it is also important to always be critical and aware of the challenges and risks associated with the use of social media in the context of social movements.²⁸

3. The Dynamic Interaction between Social Movements and International Law

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) is a global movement launched by a group of Palestinian activists in 2005 with the aim of pressuring Israel to abide by international law and respect the human rights of Palestinians. This movement uses the strategy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions to pressure

²⁸ Ulya and Ayu.



Israel economically, politically, and socially. The effectiveness of BDS's campaign in influencing international policy has been an important and controversial topic, with various studies showing the significant impact of these campaigns on the policies of various countries and international institutions. One of the main ways BDS influences international policy is through a boycott of Israeli products. This movement encourages individuals, organizations, and countries not to buy products originating in Israel or from companies operating in the occupied territories. The boycott campaign has attracted international attention and resulted in several major companies withdrawing from projects in Israel or the occupied territories. For example, Veolia Environnement, a French company, withdrew from infrastructure projects in the occupied territories after pressure from the BDS campaign.²⁹

Divestment campaigns also play an important role in BDS's strategy. Divestment involves withdrawing investments from companies involved in Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories or that support the Israeli government's policies. Several academic institutions and financial institutions around

²⁹ Jasmine Owens, 'Here We Provide an Introduction to the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement, and Explain Our Support for It.', *EthicalConsumer*, 2024 <<https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethicalcampaigns/boycotts/bds-israel-boycott>>.



the world have withdrawn their investments from companies linked to Israel as a result of the BDS campaign. For example, the University of Johannesburg severed ties with Ben-Gurion University in Israel as part of its BDS divestment campaign. In addition, sanctions are also a key element in BDS's strategy. The campaign pressured governments and international organizations to impose sanctions on Israel until the country complied with international law. Several local and national governments in Europe and Latin America have passed resolutions in favor of BDS or criticizing Israeli policies in the occupied territories. These sanctions include the termination of military cooperation, the termination of diplomatic relations, and a ban on the import of products from Israel.³⁰

In this case, it highlights the effectiveness of BDS's campaign in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and influencing international policy. Brown found that BDS's campaign managed to attract international attention and increase pressure on Israel through a series of clever advocacy strategies. BDS utilizes a variety of advocacy tools including boycotts, divestments, and sanctions to pressure Israel to comply with international law and respect the basic rights of

³⁰ Mutiara RaudathJannah, 'Boycott of Israeli Products: Getting to Know the BDS Movement and Its History', *Tempo.Com*, 2024 <<https://dunia.tempo.co/read/1802989/boikot-produk-israel-mengenal-gerakan-bds-dan-sejarahny>>.



Palestinians. Social media also plays an important role in the success of BDS campaigns. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allow BDS activists to spread their message widely and organize international support. Hashtags such as #BoycottIsrael and #FreePalestine went viral, raising awareness and participation in BDS campaigns. Research by Johnson (2019) shows that social media has become an important tool in disseminating information and building international solidarity for BDS.³¹

Social Movement in Boycotts Israeli Products



From the picture above, one example of the effectiveness of BDS in influencing policy is the Norwegian government's decision to withdraw investment from two Israeli companies

³¹ Kaslam, XXVI.



involved in the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. The decision was taken after an intensive campaign by BDS activists highlighting human rights abuses committed by the companies. However, BDS campaigns also face challenges and criticism.³² Some consider BDS a controversial movement and accuse it of anti-Semitism. This criticism comes from various governments and organizations that oppose the goals and methods of BDS. Despite this, BDS continues to gain support from various human rights groups and non-governmental organizations that see the movement as a legitimate way to pressure Israel to comply with international law and respect the basic rights of Palestinians.³³

On the other hand, BDS also faces efforts to suppress and silence voices that support this movement. Several countries have passed laws that prohibit or restrict BDS activities. For example, in some U.S. states, anti-BDS laws have been enacted to prevent companies and public institutions from supporting

³² Global Union, 'KLP, Norway's Largest Pension Fund, Divests from Companies Tied to Israeli Settlements', *Uni Global Union*, 2023 <

³³ Hugg Lovatt, 'Diferensiasi Uni Eropa Dan Dorongan Perdamaian Di Israel-Palestina', *Eropean Council on Foreign Relation*, 2024 <https://ecfr.eu/publication/eu_differentiation_and_the_push_for_peace_in_israel_palestine7163/>.



the BDS movement. This law raises debates about freedom of speech and the right to protest a country's foreign policy. Despite these challenges, the BDS campaign remains one of the most influential movements in human rights and social justice advocacy in Palestine. BDS's success in influencing international policy shows that the movement has succeeded in creating significant global pressure on Israel. In addition, BDS has managed to mobilize broad international support, which gives it additional strength in their fight for justice and human rights.³⁴

In conclusion, BDS's campaign has demonstrated its effectiveness in influencing international policy through boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategies. The movement has succeeded in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and creating significant pressure on Israel. Despite the challenges and criticism, BDS continues to gain support from various human rights groups and non-governmental organizations. BDS's success in influencing international policy shows that the movement has great potential to create meaningful change in the struggle for justice and human rights in Palestine.

³⁴ Ellen Cannon, 'Kampanye BDS Dan Anti-BDS: Perang Propaganda vs. Artikulasi Kelompok Kepentingan Legislatif', *Jerrusalem Center for Public Affair*, 2023 <<https://jcpa.org/article/the-bds-and-anti-bds-campaigns-propaganda-war-vs-legislative-interest-group-articulation/>>.



4. The Implications for Social Advocacy Strategy and International Law

The Implications for Social Advocacy Strategy and International Law in the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement has highlighted how social campaigns can have a significant impact on international policy and legal advocacy practice. Through various strategies such as boycotts, divestments, and sanctions, BDS has shown effective ways to mobilize global support and pressure countries and institutions to comply with international law. By looking at the implications of this campaign, we can gain a deeper understanding of how social advocacy strategies can contribute to changes in international law and policy.

Mobilization of International Support through Social Media. Social media has become an important tool in mobilizing international support for BDS campaigns. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram allow BDS activists to spread their message widely and organize global support. Hashtags such as BoycottIsrael and FreePalestine have gone viral, raising awareness and participation in BDS campaigns. By harnessing the power of social media, the BDS movement was able to change international public opinion and create significant pressure on Israeli policy. Influence on Economic



and Investment Policy One of the real impacts of the BDS campaign is on international economic and investment policy. Many large companies have pulled out of projects in Israel or the occupied Palestinian territories as a result of BDS pressure. For example, Veolia Environnement, a French company, withdrew from infrastructure projects in the occupied territories after pressure from the BDS campaign. This divestment decision shows how social advocacy strategies can influence global economic and investment policies.³⁵

The establishment of the BDS International Law Precedent has also contributed to the establishment of the international legal precedent. This campaign has succeeded in bringing global attention to the violations of international law committed by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories. Cases brought before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and other legal entities show how social advocacy can influence international legal decisions. Pressure from international social movements against Israeli policy in the occupied

³⁵ Edward Perchard, 'Veolia Cuts Losses in Israel after Boycott', *Resource.Co*, 2023 <<https://resource.co/article/veolia-cuts-losses-israel-after-boycott-10446#:~:text=Utilities corporation Veolia Environnement has,of pounds in lost contracts.>>.



territories has been a significant factor that prompted the filing of this case with the ICJ.³⁶

Raising Global Awareness of Human Rights, The BDS campaign has succeeded in raising global awareness of human rights abuses in Palestine. Research by Brown (2020) shows that BDS campaigns have successfully attracted international attention and increased pressure on Israel through a series of clever advocacy strategies. Using a variety of advocacy tools including boycotts, divestments, and sanctions, BDS has successfully pressured Israel to comply with international law and respect the basic rights of Palestinians. The Strategic Role of Advocacy in Global Politics BDS has shown that social advocacy can play a strategic role in global politics. The movement has mobilized broad international support and created significant political pressure on Israel. Support from various human rights groups and non-governmental organizations has strengthened BDS's position in international advocacy. This suggests that social movements can serve as agents of significant change in the context of international law and politics.³⁷

³⁶ Lazar Berman, 'UNESCO Cancels Event on Jewish Ties to Land of Israel', *The Time of Israel*, 2024 <<https://www.timesofisrael.com/unesco-cancels-event-on-jewish-ties-to-land-of-israel/>>.

³⁷ Fenton Harvey, 'OPINION- Boycotts against Israel: Can They Really Lead to Change?', *Aa.Com*, 2024



Challenges in Social Advocacy Although BDS has achieved various successes, the campaign also faces challenges and criticisms. Some consider BDS a controversial movement and accuse it of anti-Semitism. This criticism comes from various governments and organizations that oppose the goals and methods of BDS. In addition, some countries have passed laws that prohibit or restrict BDS activities, which raises debates about freedom of speech and the right to protest a country's foreign policy. Increased Effectiveness Through Global Coalitions BDS's success can also be seen in their ability to build strong global coalitions. The movement has gained support from various international organizations, academics, and human rights activists. This global coalition has helped BDS to increase pressure on Israel and promote awareness of the Palestinian issue around the world. Collaborations with various organizations have amplified the voice of BDS and expanded the reach of their advocacy.

Long-Term Impact on Foreign Policy The long-term impact of BDS on foreign policy cannot be ignored. The move has prompted several countries to revisit their policies toward Israel and the Palestinians. For example, some European governments have passed resolutions in favor of BDS or

<<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/analysis/opinion-boycotts-against-israel-can-they-really-lead-to-change/3171511>>.



criticizing Israeli policies in the occupied territories. This decision shows how social advocacy campaigns can influence foreign policy and create meaningful change in the context of international politics. Implications for the Future Advocacy Movement The success of BDS provides important lessons for future advocacy movements. By leveraging boycott, divestment, and sanctions strategies, as well as harnessing the power of social media, BDS has shown effective ways to mobilize global support and pressure countries and institutions to comply with international law. Future advocacy movements can learn from BDS's approach to increase their effectiveness in championing social justice and human rights.³⁸

The Norwegian government, through its Global Government Pension Fund, decided to withdraw investments from two Israeli companies, namely Danya Cebus and Africa Israel Investments, which are involved in the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. The decision was taken after an intensive campaign by BDS activists highlighting human rights abuses committed by the companies. This divestment decision shows how BDS's campaign can influence countries' investment policies and put

³⁸ Micheil Bot, 'The Right to Boycott: BDS, Law, and Politics in a Global Context', *Taylor & Francis Online*, 2023
<<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/20414005.2019.1672134>>.



pressure on companies involved in activities that violate international law. BDS campaigns have shown that social movements have great potential to influence international policy and fight for human rights. By using the strategy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions, as well as harnessing the power of social media, BDS has succeeded in raising global awareness of the Palestinian issue and creating significant pressure on Israel. Despite facing various challenges and criticism, BDS continues to gain support from various human rights groups and non-governmental organizations. BDS's success in influencing international policy shows that social advocacy movements can serve as agents of significant change in international legal and political contexts.³⁹

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D. Conclusion

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the most complex and protracted conflicts in the world. Starting from the emergence of Zionism and Arabism movements in the early 20th century, this conflict heated up with the

³⁹ Global Union.



establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967. This case has come to the attention of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which assesses the legal consequences of Israel's actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. In this context, social movements play an important role in mobilizing international support and influencing legal decisions through public pressure and advocacy.

Social movements play a significant role in shaping public opinion and driving social change through campaigns, protests, and other actions. One prominent example of a social movement is Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS), which was launched in 2005 by a group of Palestinian activists. BDS calls for an international boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel until the basic rights of Palestinians are respected. Through

social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, BDS activists have succeeded in disseminating information, organizing campaigns, and mobilizing global support, thereby raising awareness about the situation in Palestine and pressuring governments and institutions to act.

This study explores how social movements, particularly BDS, affect international legal processes in the



context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The dynamics of interaction between social movements and international law show that social movements can mobilize public opinion and pressure legal institutions to act. The cases brought to the ICJ highlight various aspects of the law, including human rights violations, illegal occupation, and racial discrimination. Pressure from international social movements against Israeli policies in the occupied territories has been a significant factor that prompted the filing of the case with the ICJ.

Social media has become an important tool in disseminating information and building international solidarity. The BDS movement, for example, has successfully leveraged social media to reach global audiences, spread their message, and organize solidarity actions quickly and effectively. By harnessing the power of social media, BDS is able to mobilize international public opinion and pressure governments and institutions to take action against Israel. This shows that social media not only serves as a communication tool but also as a powerful mobilization tool in modern social movements.

The case filed with the ICJ related to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories shows how pressure from social movements can affect international legal proceedings. In 2004, the ICJ issued an advisory opinion



stating that the separation wall built by Israel in the Palestinian territories violated international law. This opinion is an important victory for social movements that oppose the Israeli occupation, including BDS. Although the ICJ's advisory opinion is not binding, it has had a significant impact in increasing international pressure on Israel.

This research highlights the importance of social movements in influencing international legal processes. The Israeli-Palestinian case at the ICJ shows how social movements can rally global support and pressure legal institutions to act. Using social movement theory, this study explores the dynamics between social advocacy and legal decisions and their implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and international law as a whole. This research is expected to provide better insights into how social movements can influence legal decisions and how social media can be used as an effective advocacy tool.

This research makes a significant contribution to understanding the role of social movements in influencing international legal decisions and offers new insights into the dynamics of law and social advocacy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By understanding these dynamics, more effective strategies in social advocacy and international law can be developed to support human rights and justice in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



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