

Contesting the OECD Tourism Conference in Jerusalem

Marian Houk

In January 2010, Israel invited the OECD Tourism Committee to hold its October meeting in Jerusalem this year. Israel was in the final stages of arranging its candidacy for accession to Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a Paris-based international organization grouping the world's developed economies. The invitation was probably made during the visit to Israel of OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría, a former Minister of Finance of Mexico, who was holding discussions with senior Israeli officials.

It would be only the second time (out of 85 previous OECD tourism conferences) that the meeting would be held outside of Paris. OECD officials are careful and experienced bureaucrats – but they accepted without any apparent misgivings Israel's offer of hospitality in Jerusalem from 20 to 22 October. Later, OECD officials would say that the last-minute uproar about holding the Tourism Committee meeting in Jerusalem was “a tempest in a teacup”.

This, of course, is exactly what Israel would like the world to think.

Israel's position concerning Jerusalem is not officially accepted by most countries in the world, who have voted in the United Nations to declare “null and void” Israel's unilateral actions to (1) extend its administration and laws to East Jerusalem after Israel's conquest in the Six-Day War (June 1967) an act almost indistinguishable from annexation; and (2) then to declare “united Jerusalem” as Israel's “eternal and undivided capital” in 1980.

Objections to Israel's candidacy had to be addressed in order to secure the unanimous agreement of all 30 OECD members to its admission. These involved bribery (particularly in the arms trade); loose interpretation of pharmaceutical

patents; and human rights concerns – including Israel’s occupation of territories it seized in June 1967.

With the entry of Israel (and two other countries) into the OECD in the spring of 2010, the organization now has 33 members. Russia’s membership application is still pending.

The Israeli Tourism Ministry, the official host of the conference, approved a press release stating that the tourism conference in Jerusalem is “The first OECD event to take place in Israel since the country became an official member of the organization. The session welcomed high-level delegations from 28 OECD members”.

By the time the event opened, however there were a few less, and the level of the delegations who attended was apparently not so high. According to the Palestinian National Campaign for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, eight OECD member countries were not present at the tourism conference in Jerusalem: Norway, Canada, Ireland, UK, Sweden, Iceland, Turkey and South Africa.

Still, U.S. Commerce Department official Isabel Hill presided as Chairperson of the OECD conference in Jerusalem.

The Palestinian Authority was apparently not invited to attend, despite earlier vows from Israel to work for joint Israeli-Palestinian development in the tourism sector.

Israeli “left-wing” – this means, in the Israeli political spectrum those who are against the occupation – protestors staged an unprecedented demonstration at one of the highlighted events of the conference. As delegates arrived in a chartered bus for a dinner (hosted by Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat) at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem following the first day’s session, Israeli protestors dressed in office clothing led around blindfolded people bound in plastic handcuffs. One of the detainees lay, blindfolded, on the ground, as real uniformed Israeli security arrived. Then, the civilian-clothed Israeli demonstrator-guards spoke in an offhanded and calm manner, as if to reassure the OECD delegates. It took a few minutes for the confused delegates to realize that it was a demonstration. The short documentary video of the protest, which can be viewed on Youtube¹, had a “Candid Camera” quality.

The New York-based blogger Philip Weiss posted a report about the demonstration, entitled “There is no such thing as tourism in an occupied city” on his blog, Mondoweiss: “Note the repeated staging of Palestinian arrests and handcuffings and blindfoldings outside the Israel Museum as the attendees arrive. Note the parody of Eden Abergil’s Facebook moment. Note the activist who approaches a bus full of OECD tourism people chanting the Israeli mantra: ‘It’s nothing, really. It’s just some Palestinians that we arrested for some really bad crimes. It’s nothing that you should be concerned with’.”²

At other times, Israeli demonstrators unfurled large banners protesting the conference over the guard rails of bridges overlooking the routes taken by buses carrying the OECD delegates.

After the OECD delegates had packed up and left town, Haaretz reported that the buses hired for the event were from the Mateh Binyamin Company “that develops Jewish settlements in the West Bank”. This company is itself based in the settlement of

Psagot near Ramallah. The Tourism Ministry told Haaretz that “it didn’t see anything wrong with hiring that particular bus company.”³

Most of the conference sessions were held in the IIC Jerusalem International Conventions Center, in West Jerusalem.

A series of flaps in the days before the conference convened nearly derailed the event. The Israeli Tourism Minister told Haaretz on 5 October that: “ ‘OECD officials demanded that we do not bring the delegates to East Jerusalem, or that would move the conference to Tel Aviv’, Mizezhnikov said. ‘If we agreed to that, they promised to send many delegates. We held a meeting with the Foreign Ministry and decided to reject’ the Tel Aviv idea ... We exerted intensive pressure via the ambassadors and decided to hold the conference despite certain countries’ decision not to send delegates, including England and Spain ... I strongly denounce the states that surrendered to threats’, he added. ‘But the conference - with the participation of 21 ministers, deputy ministers and organization heads - will take place as planned in Jerusalem. This will be a declaration of intent and a seal of approval on the fact that we have a state whose recognized capital is Jerusalem’.”⁴

The OECD Secretary General Gurría was reported to have raised the matter with the Israeli government. Then, an OECD official wrote a letter stating that the organization was surprised to read “that a professional gathering of international tourism ministers under OECD auspices is apparently being used to advance national political goals that bear no relation to the issues to be discussed at the meeting ... [though] we have repeatedly stated that the holding of a meeting of an OECD body in any city is without prejudice to the status of that city under international law”.⁵

Six OECD members withdrew their participation in the Jerusalem conference before the Israeli Tourism Minister withdrew his remarks. Some – including the British – said it had nothing to do with the remarks, or the announcements, and mumbled something about scheduling conflicts or difficulties.

Meanwhile, Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refused to renew a unilateral ten-month “moratorium” on settlement construction that ended on 26 September. Netanyahu announced the “moratorium” in response to American requests for his help to re-start “direct” Israeli-Palestinian negotiations that were fizzling out anyway towards the unsuccessful end of the Annapolis process, but were finally called off by Palestinian negotiators at the end of December 2008, after Israel began a massive military attack, Operation Cast Lead, in Gaza.

Since the Annapolis process of “direct” negotiations was launched in late November 2007 (*designed to lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state by the end of 2008*), Israeli officials have said a number of times that they do not consider any part of “Jerusalem” to be a “settlement”.

It is not clear exactly what these officials mean by “Jerusalem” – but it certainly includes most of East Jerusalem, which was not part of Israel at its foundation in May 1948, or its admission to the UN a year later, in May 1949. East Jerusalem is regarded, by most other countries in the world and by Palestinians, as an integral part of the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel in 1967. However, officials in the

administrations of Netanyahu and of his predecessor, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, have publicly asserted, when questioned closely, that Jewish settlements in most of East Jerusalem are not part of any “moratorium” or even up for discussion. Meanwhile, Israel’s continuing construction of The Wall has unilaterally cut off parts of the “Greater Jerusalem Municipality” – and at least 100,000 East Jerusalem Palestinians – that Israeli unilaterally declared after the 1967 war.

Continued movement in Israeli settlement construction in East Jerusalem disrupted not only the visit of American Vice President Joe Biden in March, but also the planned start at the same time of “indirect” Israeli-Palestinian negotiations that the U.S. had extracted from Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen). Again, in September, continued Israeli settlement activity impacted, again, on an American-arranged agreement – after what Abbas confided to Arab media had been “inhuman pressure” – to move to “direct” negotiations, despite a complete lack of any progress.

Then, in October, the issue threatened the convening of the OECD tourism conference, when Israel’s Housing Ministry announced that it would issue about 238 new tenders for housing in East Jerusalem settlements of Ramot and Pisgat Zeev. (*The tenders were then published, in Hebrew, in the Maariv newspaper, in the beginning of November.*)

One European diplomat said that although the tourism conference opened as planned, the level of participation was “very, very low – second or third-ranking officials from the embassies in Tel Aviv”, instead of the ministerial-level delegations that were expected.

Though this was almost too subtle to register on most people’s radar screens, it seems to have been a sort of reverse “price tag” tied to the continuing Israeli settlement policy. (The “price tag” concept is credited to Israeli settlers who have vowed to impose a cost on Palestinian residents of the West Bank in response to any Israeli government effort to restrict the Jewish settlements.)

The head (Governor) of the Bank of Israel, Stanley Fisher, was credited, in an article in the New York Times, for putting Israel’s candidacy for membership in the OECD on the fast track. Reportedly, he lobbied the OECD for four years “with large studies of Israel’s economy aimed at demonstrating its readiness for membership”.⁶ Fisher is also behind reforms in Israel’s budgetary process, and an ideologically-difficult struggle to reallocate resources from the military to the education system, which the OECD has said is in bad shape. Particular attention was paid, during the process, to the economic statistics Israel provided.

Israeli analyst Shir Hever told Nazareth-based journalist Jonathan Cook that “The OECD is treating Israel as though it has seven million citizens when, in reality, it has 11 million subjects, of whom four million are Palestinians living under occupation. If they were included in the figures submitted to the OECD, Israel would have to be refused accession because of the enormous disparities in wealth”.⁷

Jonathan Cook noted that “According to its rules, the OECD takes account of economic activity outside a candidate state’s recognized borders in very limited circumstances, such as remittances from migrant workers. But given that this status

does not apply to the illegal settlers living in the occupied territories, the OECD committee argues that either the settlers be excluded from the data or everyone living in the territories – including Palestinians – should be factored in”.

“Israel has been caught out because it has always refused, even in its own internal data, to differentiate between Israel and the occupied territories,” Hever told Cook. Cook reported at the time that the OECD statistical committee recommended in an unpublished report that “rather than conclude that Israel has failed to meet the organization’s entry criteria, the committee proposes a workaround: Israel can be accepted to the organization and given a year to submit new data excluding the settlers”.⁸

However, it does not appear that Israel was admitted to the OECD conditionally.

Shir Hever’s analysis has been published more extensively by the Alternative Information Center.⁹ He said in a video interview that the OECD is a group of economically-developed countries that also consider themselves democracies – and this was one of the organization’s main appeal to Israel, because it believes its admission to the OECD validates its claim to be a democracy.

Karma Nabulsi prepared a legal memorandum, dated 5 May, at the request of the Palestinian civil society coalition (BNC), and presented it to OECD member states about three weeks before Israel was admitted to the organization: “The OECD and its members recognize the legal status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as Occupied Territory, the role of Israel as the Occupying Power, and the applicability of the Geneva IV Convention on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict to this situation. Such recognition triggers the legal responsibility of the Occupying Power (Israel) for the economic wellbeing of the occupied Palestinian population, numbering approximately four million people. The Occupying Power, however, has excluded this population from the statistical data submitted to the OECD ... At the same time, Israel has presented statistical data that include the population of its illegal settlements in the Occupied Territory ... Either the statistical data must include the civilian population who have a right to these protections, or the statistical data must exclude the data before accession of Israel”.¹⁰

Israel was admitted to OECD membership on 31 May 2010, after some belated opposition expressed by various Palestinian figures, including the current Palestinian Authority (PA) Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, and others including Palestinian Foreign Minister Riad al-Maliki. Israeli officials were very annoyed by Fayyad’s action – though it was merely symbolic, and also futile – and complained that it was a form of incitement, even delegitimization. This seems to have taken all of Fayyad’s energy and enthusiasm concerning the matter, for he has said nothing about the OECD tourism conference in Jerusalem.

On September 18, a month before the conference was to open, the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) National Committee (BNC), which describes itself as “a broad Palestinian civil society coalition”, sent a letter to the OECD asking that it move the conference. According to a BDS website¹¹, the letter said that “holding the conference in Jerusalem, in spite of this reality of Israel’s grave violation of international law, will be regarded by an overwhelming majority of

Palestinians, and people of conscience around the world as a decisive and far-reaching act of complicity in rewarding and perpetuating Israel's occupation, colonization and apartheid against the Palestinian people". It called upon the OECD Tourism Committee "to respect international law and relocate the conference out of Israel".

The Palestinian BDS National Committee's letter noted that "In February, Israel defied world opinion and international law, declaring two Palestinian sites in the West Bank as 'national heritage' as part of its unilateral strategy to annex them to Israel. These Israeli cultural crimes must be understood in the context of decades of Israeli crimes including the erasure of over 500 Palestinian villages in 1948, the destruction of the Moroccan Quarter in the old city of Jerusalem in 1967, and the more recent desecration of the historic cemetery of Ma'man Allah ('Mamilla') in West Jerusalem for the purposes of building a so-called 'Museum of Tolerance'."

And, the letter said, "Last June, Israeli authorities handed demolition orders to 22 residences in the Silwan neighborhood in East Jerusalem as part of a wider scheme to demolish houses and turn the area into an 'archeological park' and 'tourism center'. Extremist settler organization El Ad, supported by Israeli Antiquities Authorities, has exploited – unscientific – archeology to lay claim to the area and now promotes tourism for religious Jewish settler fanatics at the expense of the local Palestinian population who live in fear of constant violent harassment".

The torch was then raised by the chief Palestinian negotiator, Sa'eb Erekat, in an email message sent out by the PLO's Negotiations Affairs Department on 18 October – just two days before the OECD tourism conference actually opened. In his message, Erekat is quoted as thanking "the countries that have decided to withdraw their attendance to the OECD Tourism Committee Summit to be held in Jerusalem, October 20 – 22. 'Israeli control over Jerusalem is illegal and the Security Council has been clear on calling all member states not to recognize Israeli claims over the Holy City. By hosting the OECD conference in Jerusalem, Israel seeks de facto recognition of its illegal annexation of East Jerusalem, and by not attending, countries have sent Israel a clear message that it is not a state above the law'."

Erekat's statement said that "Stas Misezhnikov, the Israeli Minister of Tourism, stated Israel's desire to use the OECD conference to solidify its illegal actions when he characterized the holding of the conference as 'declaration of intent and a seal of approval on the fact that we have a state whose recognized capital is Jerusalem ... The OECD is a widely respected organization. Its member states are considered role models for the international community. Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian territory, included East Jerusalem, completely contradict the values of the organization. Holding this conference in Jerusalem creates the perception that the OECD is complicit with Israel's provocative and unlawful actions in this occupied city'."

On the second and final day of the OECD conference in Jerusalem, Ma'an News Agency published a letter signed by Fatah Central Committee member Muhammad Shtayyeh (who is *also President of PECDAR, the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, and an adviser to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas*) saying that holding the OECD tourism conference in Jerusalem "was a

startling and misguided decision, coming from such a well-respected multilateral player. First, holding this conference in illegally-annexed and Israeli-occupied Jerusalem would appear to lend legitimacy to Israel's universally unrecognized claims to the city. Second, the conference, including the attention and revenue Israel will garner from it, will serve to reward Israel, despite its continuing occupation and colonization of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. Most antithetical to this conference's purposes perhaps, all of this is done while Israel exercises complete control over tourism to the occupied Palestinian territory ... Our original request to move the meeting to another host country, or even to Tel Aviv, was rejected. Instead, the OECD decided to hold the meeting only in 'West' Jerusalem, the area of Jerusalem more commonly viewed as part of Israel. Crucially, however, Israel does not differentiate between East and West Jerusalem, but covets all of Jerusalem as its 'eternal and undivided capital'. Palestinians could only wonder what areas of occupied Jerusalem Israel would showcase during the meeting, given that most holy sites are located in occupied East Jerusalem, in particular in and around the Old City".

Shtayyeh added that "The illegal settlements, the Wall regime and numerous movement restrictions, especially in and around occupied East Jerusalem, prevent millions of Palestinians from accessing the city's holy sites. In fact, it is far easier for a foreigner from the furthest reaches of the globe to reach the Church of the Holy Sepulchre than for a Palestinian Christian from Bethlehem, just 10 kilometers away. Most ironically given this summit's topic, Israel has calculatingly decimated the Palestinian tourism industry. It has looted, confiscated or destroyed countless Palestinian archeological artifacts and heritage sites that are integral to Palestinian patrimony. To this day, Israel controls who enters and exits Palestinian territory, as well as their movement within our territory. In this vein, Israel has restricted the issuance of travel guide permits to only 42 Palestinian tour guides who are able to work in occupied East Jerusalem. This stands in stark contrast to the over 7,000 such permits Israel issued to Israeli tour guides to ensure that the incomplete, if not patently false, Israeli narrative dominates what is conveyed to the vast majority of tourists. All of the forgoing of course begs the larger question of why Israel, the largest recipient of American foreign aid, was admitted to the OECD in the first place. For these reasons, Palestinians welcome the decisions taken by those governments that chose not to attend this Summit. However, through their attendance, many other countries remain complicit in Israel's attempts to preempt the results of any negotiations process".¹²

Meanwhile, officials in Israel's Tourism Ministry said they believed that the Palestinian campaign "was aimed at undermining Israel's successful tourism marketing campaign".¹³

Ministry of Tourism Mizezhnikov opened the conference by telling participants that the event was an "important vote of confidence in Israel's position as an economic leader" – leaving off the references to Israel's position on, and in, Jerusalem which caused such a flap ten days ago. Bank of Israel Governor Fisher also addressed the OECD event in Jerusalem, as did Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who didn't pronounce the word Jerusalem even once.

Misezhenikov told the conference that “We adopted and implemented a new concept positioning Israel in its exclusive tourist particularities focusing on History, Culture and Religion. At the same time we maintained the interest in the other leisure elements ... Israel is positioned today as a destination in the general market offering culture and discovery, leisure and fun preserving the particularities of our sites. The religious and historical heritage of Israel and our region, cradle of the monotheist civilizations and cultures, belongs to the world’s collective memory”. In this context, he mentioned the problematic issue of Jerusalem, but only referred to it as “the spiritual and cultural Jerusalem”. He did not refer to it as Israel’s capital.

The Israeli Minister of Tourism also told the OECD conference that there had been a record-breaking number of visitors in 2009 – some 2.7 million tourists. He predicted that the number of tourists would rise to 3.3 million in 2010.

The Mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat, said just after taking office in 2008 that he wanted to bring 10 million tourists a year to Jerusalem – which would greatly exacerbate the terrible traffic congestion that already causes huge daily stress in the Jerusalem area.

An article published in the Israeli press just after the OECD delegates packed up and left said that tourism had reached a high for the decade in October, causing unpleasant strains in services to tourists, including a 1.5 hour delay in entry at Ben Gurion Airport [no figure was give for additional time needed for the tougher scrutiny upon exit from the country via the airport], overcrowding in the Old City, and sudden rearrangement of hotel bookings. Haaretz reported that “350,000 tourists are maxing out the capacity of the country’s hotels and placing incredible stress on service, which is suffering as a result, industry professionals say”.

The most important spiritual sites in Jerusalem are actually in the Old City of East Jerusalem, which did not become part of the State of Israel at its founding in May 1948.

The Old City came under Jordanian rule during the fighting, and was captured by Israel two decades later, in the June 1967 war.

The OECD tourism conference in Jerusalem opened a day after Israel’s Haaretz newspaper reported that “A bill sponsored by MK Gideon Ezra (Kadima) and seven other Knesset members proposes to ban residents of East Jerusalem from serving as tour guides in the city ... Ezra’s bill has so far won the endorsement of MKs Uri Ariel (National Union), Carmel Shama and Danny Danon (Likud), Avraham Michaeli (Shas), Nachman Shai and Otniel Schneller (Kadima), as well as Ilan Ghilon (Meretz). Ghilon later withdrew his signature, with his aides citing a misunderstanding. ... ‘Israel has valuable tourism sites’, the text of the proposed bill reads. “Oftentimes there are disagreements on the manner of the presentation of these sites historically, religiously, culturally and more. The city of Jerusalem, with its many historic sites, is an example of a site about which there are such disagreements. Some of the residents of Israel, like those in East Jerusalem, often have ‘dual loyalty,’ since they vote in elections of the Palestinian Authority. ‘These residents often present anti-Israeli positions to groups of tourists that they guide. To ensure foreign tourists are exposed to the national Israeli viewpoint, we suggest ruling that travel agencies, and any organization providing tours

for foreign tourists, ensure that the groups are accompanied by a tour guide who is an Israeli citizen and has institutional loyalty to the State of Israel', the bill suggests ... [However] Ezra decided to suspend work on the bill for the meantime, out of concern for the negotiations with the Palestinian Authority. 'The problem is a problem', Ezra said, 'It's clear to me there are tour guides hostile to the State of Israel and to Jerusalem. They are also the cheapest. But I don't want to hurt the talks and I will not be promoting the bill in the near future'."¹⁴

The Haaretz article noted that "Ezra, who said he was temporarily freezing work on the bill so as not to damage the negotiations with Palestinians, said in the introduction to the bill he believed Palestinian residents of Jerusalem should not be certified guides because they did not represent Israel's national interest well enough 'and in an appropriate manner'." This Haaretz report noted that some 300 Palestinians, from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, have certification as guides from Israeli Tourism Ministry.

At the beginning of the second Palestinian intifada, access for West Bank Palestinians was cut off. In 2006, the Palestinian Authority's then-Minister of Tourism managed to get some 45 permits restored for West Bank guides (while Mohammad Shtayyah, mentioned that 42 Palestinians have permits at the moment).

However, Israel's Ministry of Tourism introduced a "pilot program" in June 2010 – coincidental with their admission to the OECD – to allow 50 Israeli tour guides to work in Bethlehem and Jericho. This was said to be in response to a demand from the tourist groups themselves – Christian tourists and pilgrims were specifically mentioned. Then, just after the OECD conference was over, the Tourism Ministry announced that the Israeli military's Civil Administration had authorized an increase in permits for 200 Israelis – 100 guides and 100 drivers. The Israeli Tourism Ministry said that some 500 Israelis had applied to be part of this "pilot program".

Despite all complaints, some Bethlehem businessmen in the tourism sector now said to be earning as much as 20,000 to 30,000 U.S. dollars per day from the mass tourism industry – a huge increase in income. A recent visit by the IDF Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen Gaby Ashkenazi, for a meeting with PA security officials, set off a certain amount of Palestinian protest – and anxiety. Some Palestinians apparently fear that Israel is interested in "taking" Bethlehem and its important Christian tourism attraction, the Church of the Nativity (believed by most Christians to be the birthplace of Jesus Christ).

Meanwhile, on the very day that the OECD tourism conference concluded in Jerusalem, the Paris-based UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted a resolution setting off another paroxysm. Haaretz reported that: "Referring to the structure as the 'Bilal bin Rabah Mosque/Rachel's Tomb', UNESCO's board voted 44 to one (the U.S.), with 12 abstentions, to reaffirm that the site was 'an integral part of the occupied Palestinian territories and that any unilateral action by the Israeli authorities is to be considered a violation of international law'."¹⁵

Rachel's Tomb is in Bethlehem. The other site mentioned in the UNESCO resolution was the immensely important Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron. A UNESCO

press release describing the vote on this and four other related issues.¹⁶

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reacted at the end of October, saying it was “absurd” to classify Rachel’s Tomb as a mosque. A few days later, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon said that “relations with UNESCO would not be restored until it retracted its statement last week that two ancient biblical sites – the Cave of the Patriarchs and Rachel’s Tomb – were an integral part of the ‘occupied’ Palestinian territories. Ayalon said that the Palestinian Authority was behind the statement, which he added, was issued by the automatic Arab majority on the UNESCO board. It is another attempt by the PA to delegitimize Israel, he said”.¹⁷

But, as Israeli officials mount a massive campaign to denounce “delegitimization”, Palestinians ask what the world means by “legitimate”. Sam Bahour, an American-Palestinian now based in Ramallah, and Charles Shammas, who heads a Palestinian human rights group, wrote in *The Guardian* just before the OECD tourism conference in Jerusalem that the meeting would test the member countries’ commitment to international law: “It can make no sense for world leaders to allow themselves to be drawn progressively into acquiescing to Israel’s serious and persistent violations of international law while continuing to demand that Palestinians respect and place their confidence in international law after 62 years of dispossession and 43 years of military occupation. Yet Israel has become a habitual violator and has also become highly proficient at dragging other states along with it. If the OECD and its member countries cannot be expected to effectively resist this pull, who can be expected to hold the line? Who is left to defend the normative foundations of the just and peaceful world order that states and international organizations like the OECD regularly proclaim their resolve to promote?”⁸

Marian Houk is a freelance journalist working in Jerusalem.

Endnotes

- 1 “Protesting the OECD Conference in Jerusalem”, by J.K Damours at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fAFHsUks8c>
- 2 “There is no such thing as tourism in an occupied city”, by Phil Weiss on Mondoweiss, 25 October 2010, <http://mondoweiss.net/2010/10/there-is-no-such-thing-as-tourism-in-an-occupied-city.html>
- 3 “Settlement bus company hired to shuttle OECD Jerusalem participants” by Dimi Reider, published on 28 October 2010 at <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/settlement-bus-company-hired-to-shuttle-oecd-jerusalem-participants-1.32149>
- 4 “Tourism Minister: U.K., Spain to boycott OECD tourism conference because it’s in Jerusalem”, by Irit Rosenblum in Haaretz on 5 October 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/tourism-minister-u-k-spain-to-boycott-oecd-tourism-conference-because-it-s-in-jerusalem-1.317212>
- 5 Sergio Arenzi, Director of the OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs and Local Development (CCFE) and Head of the Local Economic and Employment Development Programme, http://www.oecd.org/document/17/0,3343,en_33873108_3941857_5_46157713_1_1_1_1_00.html
- 6 “Issues Stand Before Israel in Joining Elite Group”, by Ethan Bronner, *New York Times*, 19 January 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/20/world/middleeast/20israel.html?>
- 7 “Israel Set to Join Club of Richest Nations”, Jonathan Cook, *Monthly Review*, 8 March 2010 at <http://www.jkcook.net/Articles3/0457.htm>
- 8 “Israel Set to Join Club of Richest Nations”,

- by Jonathan Cook, *Monthly Review*, 8 March 2010, <http://www.jkcook.net/Articles3/0457.htm>
- 9 Shir Hever on Israel and the OECD, 27 September 2010,
 - 10 <http://bdsmovement.net/files/Karma-Nabulsi-legal-memo.pdf>
 - 11 <http://www.bdsmovement.net/773/?q=node>
 - 12 “Legitimizing Occupation”, by Muhammad Shtayyah on 21 October 2010 on Ma’an News Agency at <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=326312>
 - 13 “PA, Arab League Fail to Derail Jerusalem Confab”, by Steve K. Walz in *The Jewish Press* on 20 October 2010, <http://www.jewishpress.com/pageroute.do/45666>
 - 14 <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/mks-look-for-ban-on-east-jerusalem-arabs-guiding-in-the-city-1.319890>
 - 15 “Israel clashes with UNESCO in row over holy sites”, by Jonathan Lis, *Haaretz*, 3 November 2010, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/israel-clashes-with-unesco-in-row-over-holy-sites-1.322758>
 - 16 http://www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/executive_board_adopts_five_decisions_concerning_unescos_work_in_the_occupied_palestinian_and_arab_territories
 - 17 “PM to meet with Ban Ki-moon in New York”, by Tova Lazaroff, *Jerusalem Post*, 4 November 2010, <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=193921>
 - 18 “Can the OECD Stand Up to Israel?”, by Sam Bahour and Charles Shammass in *The Guardian* on 12 October 2010 at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/oct/12/israel-oecd-tourism-summit>