

[Meretz USA: Buy Israel – Don't Buy Settlements \(They're not the Same\)](#)

On February 15, 2011, Meretz USA President, Dr. Moises Salinas-Fleitman, and chair Theodore Bikel issued the following press release.

Meretz USA President, Dr. Moises Salinas-Fleitman, and chair Theodor Bikel today called on the American Jewish community to draw a clear distinction in their consumer choices between Israel and Israeli settlements in the occupied territories. Kicking off Meretz USA's "[Buy Israel – Don't Buy Settlements \(They're not the Same\)](#)" initiative and building on last year's "[Draw a Line at the Green Line](#)" statement of principles, Salinas-Fleitman and Bikel stressed that Meretz USA, "a longstanding affiliate of the American Zionist Movement", was taking this position based on its Zionist ideology and its "love of Israel, and ... sincere, abiding and growing concern" for Israel "as a Jewish and democratic state".

The Meretz USA President and Chair stressed that they were in no way expressing support for the global BDS (Boycott-Divestment-Sanctions) movement, which advocates the boycott of all of Israel and all Israelis. On the contrary, they said, "American Jews should express their support for Israel's continued existence within the Green Line by purchasing Israeli goods and services that are made within the Green Line".

The Meretz USA officials defined efforts to, "boycott, divest from or sanction Israel proper (within the Green Line)" as "misguided and ineffective", since they, "run[...] the risk of strengthening those forces within Israel opposed to a genuine peace between Israel and the Palestinians, and of alienating many mainstream Israelis of good will". The use of BDS must also be, "denounce[d] ... whenever employed as a tactic to bring an end to the State of Israel," the Meretz USA President and Chair underscored.

However, Salinas-Fleitman and Bikel stressed, Israel's uncontested legitimacy, "does not extend to the settlements created in the occupied territories".

They also noted that many Israelis, including professors, directors, writers and performing artists had begun to boycott the academic and cultural institutions established in the occupied territories, and that the American Jewish community should stand in support of these brave Israelis.

While acknowledging that, "a number of settlements could one day become part of the State of Israel should there be equitable land swaps under a final-status peace agreement," the Meretz USA statement emphasizes that today's ongoing settlement and Occupation policies are, "compromis[ing] Israel's character," and, "undermining Israel's existence", and that American Jews needed to do their share in bringing them to an end.

The full text of the statement from Meretz USA can be found on the Meretz USA website by clicking [here](#).