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to
Supervisor
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To: Bryan Albee
Subject: Veolia Transportation

Board Members -

Attached find a letter from Veolia Transportation regarding the sale of its bus operation in Israel. Veolia Transportation is the contract operator of Sonoma County Transit and its operation of bus service in Israel has been opposed by some local organizations publicly over the past year.

Please refer to the third paragraph of the attached letter regarding Veolia's announcement.

Please contact me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Bryan

Bryan Albee
Transit Systems Manager
Sonoma County Transit
707-585-7516

RECEIVED

SEP 13 2013

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SONOMA**



September 13, 2013

Esteemed Members of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors:

The purpose of this letter, sent on behalf of our senior team at Veolia Transportation, is to update you on Veolia Transportation's parent company's sale of its bus business in Israel.

We have learned that the Boycott, Divestment, Sanction or BDS movement is again trying to gear up in Sonoma County to renew its attack on Veolia Transportation's contract with Sonoma County to operate and maintain the local transit system. As you know, Veolia Transportation has 95 employees in our operation in Sonoma County, men and women who live and work in the County and who have served its citizens for the past 22 years delivering high quality transit service. As if these dedicated transit people are mere "collateral damage" to their cause, BDS is fueling a petition to "dump Veolia" with false allegations about Veolia Transportation's parent company's services in Israel. BDS leaders have consistently shown a callous indifference to the truth about those they target, or to the harm they try to inflict upon others, like our employees who have nothing to do with the complex Arab-Israeli conflict half way around the world.

Relevant to the attacks upon Veolia Transportation, we would like to inform you that last month, our parent company, Transdev, sold its entire bus transit operation in Israel to an Israeli bus company. The sale is final and has been approved by the Israeli Transportation Ministry. Prior to this sale, our parent company had operated some 127 bus routes in pre-1967 Israel for the past decade, under contract to local authorities. In addition, they had operated 2 or 3 routes that passed through the West Bank, which were falsely characterized as having discriminatory practices. These assertions were false and in no way was the BDS movement involved in Transdev's decision to sell its bus operation. The sale was in the works for some time as part of Transdev's global strategy to consolidate operations, decrease its debt, and fund further growth in the U.S. and other selected countries. It was not due to any additional factors, political or otherwise.

The following link provides additional information on our parent company's global plans and its rationale for the divestment of a range of transportation assets in numerous countries:
<http://www.transdev.net/en/media/press-releases/transdev-priority-recovery-development.htm>

Transdev Will Continue to Operate the Jerusalem Light Rail System: Our parent company is a 5% owner of this popular, modern system that has 130,000 daily passengers and is used equally and without discrimination by Palestinians, Israelis, tourists and visitors alike. Anyone can travel at any time -- it is a completely open system. There is no discrimination of any type in terms of who accesses it or is employed in operating it (about one-half of the train operators are Arab). All signage on trains, on tickets and in stations is in Hebrew, Arabic and English. A quick search on Google Images will confirm all these statements.

In fact, passenger research about the light rail system was conducted in 2012 by a third-party global market research firm, and confirmed that an overwhelming number of Palestinians, almost 85%, say they're satisfied with the light rail system and 77% say it shortens their travel time. Israeli riders also have very positive opinions about the service.

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BDS Purpose: BDS is a global movement that allies with local groups to attack companies that do business in Israel or the Occupied Territories of Palestine. In the Sonoma area, BDS is aligned with the North Coast Coalition for Palestine and most recently with a group formed under the name of SAFFR (Sonoma Alliance for a Fair Ride).

BDS has targeted many companies that do business in Israel besides Veolia, including McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Caterpillar, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Costco, Motorola, Intel, Sara Lee, Timberland, Estee Lauder, Starbucks, and more. They have attacked Madonna and Beyonce as well for performing concerts in Israel.

BDS is fostered by the longstanding international boycott efforts of the League of Arab States against Israel and targets companies that do business with Israel, regardless of the nature of the business. In pursuing its goal of demonizing Israel and companies that do business with Israel, the BDS movement makes many patently false claims about the companies it targets.

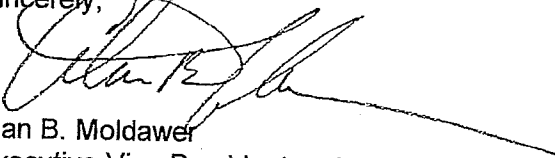
BDS founder, Omar Barghouti, describes its organization as committed to the "euthanization of Israel." In the U.S., the BDS movement makes it clear that its mission is to end U.S. military support for Israel.

Summary: Neither Transdev nor Veolia Environnement (which is a part owner of Transdev) is part of the complicated conflicts between Israel and its neighbors. Our company has no political agenda. Our only agenda is to bring essential services to human beings who need them, under contract to local authorities.

The point of our unmasking these local groups and citizens that are part of the BDS movement is not to minimize the plight of the Palestinian people or choose sides in the underlying conflicts in that complex region of the world. The situation of the Palestinian people deserves a peaceful resolution, and Israel deserves the right to exist in peace and security. However, attacking or attempting to boycott companies that provide essential services is divisive, misdirected and will not resolve these issues.

Finally, Veolia Transportation here in the U.S. has no involvement in its parent company's operations in the over 20 countries it does business worldwide. Our decision-making authority only extends to North America. That said please do not hesitate to contact us if you or any Board member would like additional information or a personal meeting on these topics. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alan B. Moldauer
Executive Vice-President and General Counsel

To: Supervisor Efren Carrillo, Supervisor Susan Gorin, Supervisor Shirlee Zane, Supervisor David Rabbitt, Supervisor Mike McGuire. **Copies to:** Sonoma County Administrator Veronica Ferguson, Sonoma County Director of Transportation and Public Works, Bryan Albee, Sonoma County Transit System Manager