

Hawking Boycotts Israel

- [1] [Civil & Human Rights](#) •
- [2] [Commentary](#) •

on **جمعة**, 10/05/2013 - 10:34 *Anonymous* , submitted by *Stephen Lendman* By

Hawking Boycotts Israel

by Stephen Lendman

Hawking was invited to participate in a June 18 - 20 Israeli Presidential Conference. Initially he accepted. In early May he declined. He's boycotting. He's protesting Israel's occupation. More on that below.

says he's the "former Lucasian Professor of [3] [web site](#) Hawking's a renown British physicist. His Mathematics at the University of Cambridge."

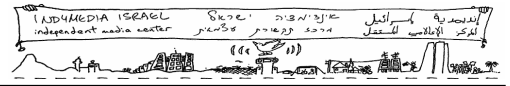
-" It was an international bestseller. His latest book co-[4] [A Brief History of Time](#)His books include "
.[5] [The Grand Design](#)ritten with "renowned science writer" Leonard Miodinow is titled "

It's described as a "groundbreaking new work." It's based on Hawking's 40 years of research and recent "extraordinary astronomical observations and theoretical breakthroughs to reveal an original and controversial theory."

Hawking remains active at Cambridge. He retains an office in its Department for Applied Maths and Theoretical Physics. He's university Director of Research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology.

He's worked on basic laws governing the universe. He's widely published. He received 12 honorary degrees, as well as many awards, medals and prizes.

He's a Royal Society Fellow and US National Academy of Sciences member. He's now 71. At age 21, he was diagnosed with ALS. It's known as Lou Gehrig's disease.



It's characterized by debilitating progressive weakness, muscle atrophy and fasciculations, muscle spasticity, dysarthria, dysphagia, and dyspnea. ALS is the most common neuron disease. It confines Hawking to a wheelchair.

It hasn't dimmed his extraordinary intellect. He combines family life and research. He has three children and three grandchildren. He hopes one day he'll make it into space.

focuses on "Facing Tomorrow 2013" and "The Human [6] [Israeli Presidential Conference](#) The fifth Factor in Shaping Tomorrow."

It's planned for Jerusalem. It's under the auspices of Shimon Peres. It's celebrating his 90th birthday. Long ago he should have been condemned.

He's responsible for decades of crimes of war and against He's a war criminal multiple times over. humanity. He helped institutionalize Israeli state-sponsored terror.

As a Knesset member, Deputy Defense Minister, Defense Minister, Foreign Minister, other ministerial positions, Vice Premier, Prime Minister, and Israeli President, his crimes include colonialism, apartheid, militarized occupation, and regional wars of aggression.

He shamelessly represents rogue leadership. In 1994, Nobel Committee members awarded him their Peace Prize. It wasn't the first time it went to a war criminal. It won't be the last.

Israel's Presidential Conference announcement said the following:

"As in previous years, it'll "look at tomorrow and engage the central issues that will influence the face of our future: geopolitics, economics, society, environment, culture, identity, education, new media, and more."

Attendees include "world leaders, international scholars, activists, poets and scientists, artists and clergy, entrepreneurs, economists and industrialists, as well as representatives of the next generation of leaders - promising young individuals who radiate innovation and creativity."

Participants include Netanyahu, Peres, Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, Mikhail Gorbachev, former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo, Monaco's Prince Albert, Barbra Streisand, Natan Sharansky, David Axelrod, and Elliott Abrams, among others.

Topics include:

"Should We Wait it Out? Israel and a Changing Middle East"

"Tomorrow's Wars - No Longer Science Fiction"

"The World Order - Facing Tomorrow's Challenges"

"Political Islam - Where is It Headed?"

"The Decisions that will Shape Tomorrow"

Hawking was scheduled as a featured speaker. At least one report said he'd keynote the conference.

Initially, Cambridge University communications director, Tim Holt, said he cancelled for health reasons. Later he said Hawking's office told him otherwise. He withdrew "based on advice from Palestinian academics that he should respect the boycott."

conference organizers, saying: [7] [wrote](#) He's protesting Israel's occupation. On May 3, he

"I accepted the invitation to the Presidential Conference with the intention that this would not only allow me to express my opinion on the prospects for a peace settlement, but also because it would allow me to lecture on the West Bank."

"However, I have received a number of emails from Palestinian academics. They are unanimous that I should respect the boycott."

"In view of this, I must withdraw from the conference. Had I attended, I would have stated my opinion that the policy of the present Israeli government is likely to lead to disaster."

Anti-Defamation League (ADL) demagoguery is longstanding. It disseminates pro-Israeli , called [8] [Abraham Foxman](#) propaganda. It attacks Israeli critics unjustifiably. Its national director, Hawking's withdrawal "a slap in the face to academic freedom."

Israel's Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor said:

"Never has a scientist of this stature boycotted Israel." Hawking became "part of the problem, not the solution," he added.

Conference chairman Israel Maimon said:

"The academic boycott against Israel is in our view outrageous and improper, certainly for someone for whom the spirit of liberty lies at the basis of his human and academic mission."

"Israel is a democracy in which all individuals are free to express their opinions, whatever they may be. The imposition of a boycott is incompatible with open, democratic dialogue."

Israel's no democracy. It never was. It isn't now. It's a rogue terror state. It's intolerant of legitimate Israeli criticism.

Palestinian academics, activists and others support Hawking's decision. Omar Barghouti's a founding member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI).

He welcomed Hawking's decision, saying:

"Palestinians deeply appreciate Stephen Hawking's support for an academic boycott of Israel."

"We think this will rekindle the kind of interest among international academics in academic boycotts that was present in the struggle against apartheid in South Africa."

Separately, PACBI said:

"Boycotting Israeli academic and cultural institutions is an urgently needed form of pressure against Israel that can bring about its compliance with international law and the requirements for a just peace."



The British Committee for the Universities of Palestine (BRICUP) supports the academic boycott of Israel. It said Hawking decided to support the initiative, adding:

"This is his independent decision to respect the boycott, based upon his knowledge of Palestine, and on the unanimous advice of his own academic contacts there."

Before announcing his boycott, Birzeit University's Samia al-Botmeh said:

"We tried to communicate two points to him."

"First, that Israel is a colonial entity that involves violations of the rights of the Palestinians, including academic freedom, and then asking him to stand in solidarity with Palestinian academic colleagues who have called for solidarity from international academics in the form of boycotting Israeli academia and academic institutions."

Al-Botmeh called his withdrawal "fantastic. I think it's wonderful that he has acted on moral grounds."

"That's very ethical and very important for us as Palestinians to know and understand that there are principled colleagues in the world who are willing to take a stand in solidarity with an occupied people."

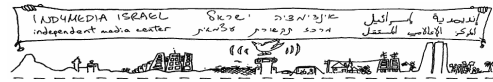
Desmond Tutu and other noted figures call Israeli apartheid worse than anything South Africa experienced.

Fifteen years ago, Nelson Mandela said:

"We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."

Cambridge University acting communications director, Tim Holt, corrected his initial statement saying:

"We have now received confirmation from Professor Hawking's office that a letter was sent on Friday to the Israeli president's office regarding his decision not to attend the Presidential Conference, based on advice from Palestinian academics that he should respect the boycott."



Numerous high-profile figures, academics, independent journalists, activists, and others support the boycott Israel campaign.

Doing the right thing is its own reward. Imagine the difference if most everyone felt the same way.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book is titled "Banker Occupation: Waging Financial War on Humanity."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network.

It airs Fridays at 10AM US Central time and Saturdays and Sundays at noon. All programs are archived for easy listening.

<http://www.progressiveradionetwork.com/the-progressive-news-hour>

<http://www.dailycensored.com/hawking-boycotts-israel/>

):03/09/2014 - 15:54 Source URL (retrieved on
<https://indymedia.org.il/ar/article/2013/5/hawking-boycotts-israel>

Links:

- [1] <http://indymedia.org.il/ar/category/category/civil-human-rights>
- [2] <http://indymedia.org.il/ar/commentary>
- [3] <http://www.hawking.org.uk/>
- [4] <http://www.amazon.com/Brief-History-Time-Stephen-Hawking/dp/0553380168>
- [5] <http://www.amazon.com/The-Grand-Design-Stephen-Hawking/dp/055338466X>
- [6] <http://2013.presidentconf.org.il/en/>
- [7] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2013/may/08/hawking-israel-boycott-furore>
- [8] <http://www.adl.org/press-center/press-releases/israel-middle-east/stephen-hawkings-decision-to-withdraw-israeli-conference-slap-in-face-academic-freedom.html#.UYtojaWSLuQ>