

<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article8875>



Social movements

#StopFuelingGenocide: Boycott Chevron!

- IV Online magazine - 2025 - IVP602 - March 2025 -

Publication date: Saturday 1 March 2025

Copyright © International Viewpoint - online socialist magazine - All rights reserved

During the second weekend of Trump's second term, demonstrators in more than 20 U.S. cities staged lively protests outside Chevron gas stations, plants, and offices. Their demand: an end to the oil giant's lucrative partnership with the apartheid State of Israel.

In Oakland and Alameda, California, scores of protesters braved an atmospheric river to successfully halt patronage at Chevron-owned gas stations. In Washington, D.C., demonstrators gathered outside Chevron's lobbying office calling for Chevron to "Stop Fueling Genocide."

Other spirited actions took place in Birmingham, Alabama; Bellingham, Tacoma, Wenatchee, and Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Jose, Silicon Valley, Berkeley, Sacramento, Chino Hills, and Los Angeles California; Plano, Texas; Tampa, Florida; and Golden, Colorado.

Many of the demonstrators have confronted Chevron before. The corporation has long been a world-class villain in the eyes of climate and environmental activists for its ecological depredations around the world.

Now it has become one of the prime targets of global BDS (boycott, divestment, sanctions) organizing in support of the Palestinian people. With a huge public presence of more than 7,000 gas stations in the United States and a direct role in empowering Israel's atrocities, Chevron is a prime candidate for an organized consumer boycott.

Chevron earned its billing as a top-tier target of the Palestinian-led BDS Movement by pumping gas — lots of it. Israel's war machine couldn't run without the gas supplied by Chevron. Off the coast of Palestine in the eastern Mediterranean Sea there are vast reserves of fossil gas. Since 2020 Chevron has operated the two major Israeli-claimed fossil gas fields, Tamar and Leviathan.

As Israel bombed hospitals, homes, universities, and UN schools in Gaza, Chevron pumped gas from the depths of the sea to feed Israel's onshore power generation plants. The plants produce most of Israel's electricity. Without Chevron's ongoing contribution the lights would go out on Israel's military, police stations, and illegal settlements. Chevron also pumps billions of dollars in revenue to Israeli government coffers.

Demanding an End to Complicity

The Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC) — the largest coalition in Palestinian civil society — launched the escalating global boycott campaign targeting Chevron in January 2024. The BDS movement had first called for divestment from Chevron in 2020 when Chevron took over from Noble Energy as the primary owner and operator of Israel's gas fields. The campaign is now expanding to engage with the broader public by mounting a consumer boycott of Chevron gas stations, including those operating under the brand names Texaco and Caltex.

"Chevron has been a divestment target, but we added it as a boycott target after Israel's Gaza genocide began, and we've already seen campaigns and actions around the world at Chevron gas stations, refineries, and corporate offices as well as Chevron's university partnerships and event sponsorships," says Olivia Katbi, BNC North American coordinator.

“We are not asking for charity, but for solidarity,” explains Omar Barghouti, cofounder of the BNC in 2005 and recipient of the Gandhi Peace Award in 2017. “We’re demanding an end to complicity. As the struggle that ended apartheid in South Africa has shown, ending state, corporate, and institutional complicity in Israel’s regime of oppression, especially through the nonviolent tactics of BDS, is the most effective form of solidarity with our liberation struggle.”

The BDS movement based its targeting of Chevron on a strategic analysis of how a boycott can have a meaningful impact on corporations complicit in suffering.

Opportunity for a Win

“The BDS movement uses the historically successful method of targeted boycotts inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement, the US Civil Rights movement, and the Indian anti-colonial struggle, among others worldwide,” says Katbi. “We strategically focus on a relatively smaller number of carefully selected companies that play a clear and direct role in Israel’s crimes — and where there is a real potential for winning.”

Katbi further explains, “Chevron entered the Israeli market in 2020; it can just as easily exit. Therefore, we see this as a winnable campaign. The Chevron campaign has an easy way for consumers to be involved and apply pressure, by boycotting, picketing, and engaging with local gas stations. This tactic is inspired by the Shell boycott during the South African anti-apartheid movement.

Other complicit companies with gas stations, like Valero, [are on the divestment list](#). But to be successful in our boycott campaigning against Chevron, we need to focus on one company at a time.”

While expressing appreciation for those who feel compelled to boycott all products and services of companies tied in any way to Israel, the BDS movement argues for [more focus on fewer targets](#). Spontaneous campaigns aimed at Starbucks and McDonald’s have attracted popular support, but they don’t make the BNC’s list of priority targets. Apartheid can thrive without Ventis and Big Macs, they say, but it can’t run without gas. Going after every complicit company runs the risk of making no impression on any of them.

Cross-Movement Synergy: Apartheid and Environmental Devastation

The BDS Movement also sees in the Chevron boycott a strategic opportunity to build an alliance between Palestine solidarity and environmental activists based on a shared understanding and abhorrence of the human, ecological, and climate impacts of Israel’s assault on Gaza.

Chevron holds the “distinction” of being the world’s leading historical producer of greenhouse gas emissions among investor-owned oil companies. An exhaustive [2021 report](#) on Chevron’s [global record of ecocide, genocide, and corruption](#) exposed Chevron’s “severe abuse of Indigenous people, as well as massive destruction of local environments while forcing the world into a crisis from fossil fuel-induced climate change.” Israel’s war, like all wars, contributes directly to [destroying the climate](#) and [adding fuel](#) to the fossil fuel industry’s effort to burn up the planet.

“We’re building a global intersectional Boycott Chevron campaign in partnership with the climate justice movement

and Indigenous peoples around the world, including in Ecuador, who are exposing and resisting the colonial violence of Chevron's extractivism, environmental destruction, and grave human rights violations," says BNC's Barghouti.

"In Gaza, Israel is not only committing a genocide against 2.3 million Palestinians," Barghouti avers.

"It is also committing what international law experts call domicide — the mass destruction of homes and living conditions to make our territory uninhabitable — and ecocide. Though the full extent of the damage caused to the environment by Israel's relentless bombardment and destruction in Gaza has not yet been documented, satellite imagery already showed the destruction of about 38 to 48 percent of tree cover and farmland."

As [the Guardian](#) reported nearly a year ago, "Palestinian olive groves and farms have been reduced to packed earth. Soil and groundwater have been contaminated by munitions and toxins. The sea is choked with sewage and waste, the air polluted by smoke and particulate matter."

"Palestinians living under Israel's colonial rule, with no control over our land or natural resources, are highly vulnerable to the climate crisis," Barghouti stresses.

"With Israel monopolizing resources, destroying our agricultural land, denying access to water, rising temperatures are exacerbating desertification as well as water and land scarcity, entrenching climate apartheid."

#BoycottChevron Strengthens Solidarity

U.S. organizations ranging from the Quaker group [American Friends Service Committee](#) (AFSC) and [US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#) (USCPR) to the [Democratic Socialists of America](#) (DSA) have taken up the BNC's call to organize around the Chevron Boycott. AFSC has provided an extensive [toolkit for organizers](#), including designs for stickers, banners, and flyers that can be adapted by local campaigns and a [Fact Sheet: Chevron Fuels Israeli Apartheid and War Crimes](#).

Since the launch of the boycott, the BNC reports that "tens of thousands of consumers have taken the pledge to boycott Chevron gas stations, dozens of groups around the world have led pickets at Chevron, Caltex, and Texaco gas stations, and at least three cities have divested from Chevron."

In February 2024, hundreds of protesters staged a "Chevron Out of Palestine" rally outside the gates of Chevron's Richmond refinery, one of the largest refineries in California. The participants and endorsers of the rally included such diverse groups as the Oil & Gas Action Network, East Bay DSA, Idle No More, Bay Area Palestine Solidarity, Labor Rise Climate Jobs Action Group, Jewish Voice for Peace, Common Humanity Collective, Sunrise Movement, 1000 Grandmothers, Rich City Rays, Rising Tide, Coalition Against Chevron in Myanmar, San Francisco Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Asian Pacific Environmental Network, Palestinian Feminist Collective, Bay Area Health Workers for Palestine, Muslim Writers Collective, Amazon Watch, California Trade Justice Coalition.

In August 2024, a similarly broad coalition of organizations in Los Angeles, dedicated to Palestinian human rights and to addressing the global climate crisis, demonstrated at the Chevron Refinery in El Segundo, just south of the LA airport.

The LA coalition included Black Lives Matter, Code Pink, Extinction Rebellion, Veterans for Peace, White People 4

#StopFuelingGenocide: Boycott Chevron!

Black Lives, Queers 4 Palestine, Youth Climate Strike, SoCal 350 Climate Action, and local chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine.

Demonstrations at the refinery gates have served a useful purpose in uniting different social movements in common cause, but the isolated locations of the refineries means that the actions reached few members of the public directly. That is changing as the emphasis shifts to gas station pickets reaching out to Chevron's customers.

Operating under the brand names Chevron, Texaco, and Caltex, Chevron stations are scattered across 21 states, with the largest concentrations in California, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Washington, Louisiana, Arizona, Oregon, and Nevada.

Hundreds are corporate-owned, but the majority are owned by franchisees who are locked into long-term relationships with the behemoth. Boycott organizers are asking these franchise owners to communicate directly with Chevron urging termination of its contracts with Israel.

In September 2024, #BoycottChevron climate justice groups and human rights activists staged 15 public events around the world as part of a week of action targeting Chevron. Protesters decorated Chevron's headquarters in San Ramon, California, with a large banner declaring Chevron "the genocide energy company."

Demonstrators at gas stations asked vehicle owners to gas up elsewhere and Chevron franchise owners to sign a letter asking Chevron to divest from Israel and post in their window a notice that they have asked Chevron to do so. Franchisees who sign on will not be picketed.

In September 2024 [#BoycottChevron](#) climate justice groups and human rights activists staged [15 public events](#) around the world as part of a week of action targeting Chevron. Protesters decorated [Chevron's headquarters](#) in San Ramon, California, with a large banner declaring Chevron "the genocide energy company."

Demonstrators at gas stations asked vehicle owners to fill up elsewhere and sign the boycott pledge. Chevron franchise owners were asked to sign a letter asking the corporation to divest from Israel and to post a notice in their window that they have done so. Franchisees who sign on are not picketed.

As part of the September week of action the Democratic Socialists of America International Committee launched DSA's own #StopFuelingGenocide campaign, calling on DSA chapters across the country to help build the boycott. In recent months California DSA members organized demonstrations at gas stations in Oakland, Silicon Valley, and San Diego, and Texas DSAers staged actions in Houston and Austin.

Chevron seeks to curry local favor by investing a small portion of its PR budget in the nonprofit community. When local governments seek to regulate Chevron's activities the beneficiaries of Chevron's "charity" are expected to show up at public hearings and put a community face on Chevron's talking points. DSA is encouraging its chapters to pressure nonprofits and organizers of charity events to turn down fossil-fuel money this year.

Chevron is in the process of moving its global headquarters from California to Houston, Texas, where it is the main sponsor of the annual Houston Marathon. This year, [Houston DSA](#) was on hand to explain that Chevron's generosity in Houston is funded in part by its profiteering in the Eastern Mediterranean.

It's Only a Short-Term Business

Boycott organizers recognize that it will take a massive global movement to persuade Chevron to end its business in Israel, much less to end its production of fossil fuels, as the future of a human-habitable planet requires.

Despite the challenges, #BoycottChevron activists believe victory is possible. Besides the boycott campaign, there are many other factors at play.

Chevron's assets off the coast of Palestine face risks beyond the very real reputational injury and economic pressure the international movement brings to bear. Chevron CEO Mike Wirth [acknowledged](#) in [a sit-down interview](#) sponsored by the Atlantic Council, a ruling-class think tank, that Chevron's gas fields in the Eastern Mediterranean face physical peril operating in a war zone.

As the 2021 report shows, with hundreds of lawsuits on every continent against the corporation for spills, blowouts, and other violations of numerous laws including those against violent crimes, Chevron was already liable for tens of billions of dollars in fines and compensation before it began its activities connected to the Palestinian genocide.

"Chevron only began investments in Israeli apartheid markets in 2020," DSA campaign leaders explain in their orientation for boycott organizers. "Our task is to make it easier and more profitable for Chevron to divest from its assets in Israel than to continue holding on to them. Chevron can choose to sell off this investment at any time. We can win."

You can join the #BoycottChevron campaign by sending a message to CEO Mike Wirth via bit.ly/boycottchevron.

Resources:

[Fact Sheet: Chevron Fuels Israeli Apartheid and War Crimes, Action Center for Corporate Accountability](#)

[AFSC Boycott Chevron campaign info](#)

[BDS Movement's Call for a Consumer Boycott of Chevron-Branded Gas Stations](#)

[Report on Chevron's Global Destruction: Ecocide, Genocide, and Corruption](#)

Source: [Against the Current](#) 1 March 2025

PS:

If you like this article or have found it useful, please consider donating towards the work of International Viewpoint. Simply follow this link: [Donate](#) then enter an amount of your choice. One-off donations are very welcome. But regular donations by standing order are also vital to our continuing functioning. See the last paragraph of [this article](#) for our bank account details and take out a standing order. Thanks.