Boycott Israeli Universities? Boycott Ours, Too!

“As a citizen, I am profoundly disturbed by the recent vote by Britain’s new University and College Union to advance a boycott against Israeli academic institutions. As a university president and professor, I find this idea utterly antithetical to the fundamental values of the academy, where we will not hold intellectual exchange hostage to the political disagreements of the moment. In seeking to quarantine Israeli universities and scholars, this vote threatens every university committed to fostering scholarly and cultural exchanges that lead to enlightenment, empathy, and a much-needed international marketplace of ideas.

“At Columbia, I am proud to say that we embrace Israeli scholars and universities that seek to challenge the political disagreements of the moment. In seeking to quarantine Israeli universities and scholars, this vote threatens every university committed to fostering scholarly and cultural exchanges that lead to enlightenment, empathy, and a much-needed international marketplace of ideas.

Le Billot, President, Columbia University

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