



June 15, 2017

AEN Statement on the Anti-BDS Resolution at the MLA

On June 14, 2017, members of the Modern Language Association (MLA) voted 1,954 to 885 to "refrain from endorsing the boycott" of Israeli academic institutions.

The language of the resolution reads: "Whereas endorsing the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel contradicts the MLA's purpose to promote teaching and research on language and literature; Whereas the boycott's prohibition of the evaluation of work of individual Israeli scholars conflicts with Resolution 2002-1, which condemns boycotts against scholars; and Whereas endorsing the boycott could curtail debates with representatives of Israeli universities, such as faculty members, department chairs, and deans, thereby blocking possible dialogue and general scholarly exchange; Be it resolved that the MLA refrains from endorsing the boycott."

AEN would like to recognize and applaud the work of AEN members, SPME members and others in MLA Members for Scholars Rights who have helped lead the way in making the MLA infertile ground for resolutions about academically boycotting Israel. This is a telling victory in the struggle against the BDS movement and its efforts to politicize academic associations.