

Fay Pafford - Speech for APF Committe 13 December 2024

My name is Fay Pafford and I have a deferred Pension with you as a former employee of the University of Bath.

About six weeks ago, I was put in contact with a trainee doctor in Gaza called Said Arooq - a young man of 21 whose life-long ambition is to serve his people by becoming a surgeon. In October of last year he was looking forward to starting his third year of medical school. This all stopped when his university was destroyed by Isreali bombs. His family fled after their home was destroyed; and they have now been displaced twice. Said volunteers in one of the few remaining hospitals in the north of Gaza. He puts his life at risk every time he walks from his home to the hospital as Isreali drones regularly shoot and kill people walking in the streets. He is never safe. When Said isn't at the hospital he attempts to study online, find food for his family and comfort his 10 year old brother who is traumatised and deeply afraid.

Said's medical studies, his normal family life and his future ambitions have now been completely destroyed and if it were not for the financial aid from the [GoFundMe](#) I organise for him, he would be unable to feed himself, buy warm clothing for his brother and continue his studies online.

The UN Global Compact asks companies to embrace, support and enact, within their sphere of influence, a set of core values in the area of human rights.

Principles 1 & 2 state that businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights and make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

You might think Said isn't connected to the fund. But he is connected, and the Avon Pension Fund is complicit in human rights abuses.

Investments in General Dynamics Corporation financed the 'bunker-busting' bombs used to destroy the University Said studied at and the Al Shifa hospital he trained at. They have provided the guns and amunition used to maim the many children Said has operated on - including the child whose stomach he picked shrapnel out of earlier this week.

Investments in Northrop Grumman provide Israel with the Hellfire missiles used to destroy Said's home and local mosque.

Investments in BAE technologies provide Isreal with the drones used to shoot, kill, and maim the many people Said and his colleagues daily risk their lives for.

Investments in Boeing Corporation provided Isreal with the precision-guided bomb-kits used to kill three of Said's medical colleagues and their families a few days ago.

All of these are grave war-crimes which the ICJ clearly state may amount to Genocide. If you do not wish to be complicit in this, there is only one course of action open to you. Divestment.