



## Prof. Gert Weisskirchen

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To the representatives  
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## **PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE OF THE OSCE ON COMBATING ANTISEMITISM DENOUNCES BRITISH UNIVERSITY UNION CALL FOR ANTI-ISRAEL BOYCOTT**

Professor Gert Weisskirchen, the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE on Combating Antisemitism, has expressed grave concerns about anti-Israel resolutions passed yesterday by the University and College Union (UCU) in Great Britain. The motions encourage boycotts of Israeli scholars and academic institutions and call for a stop of EU funding for Israeli research.

“Anti-Israel boycott motions are a morally reprehensible attack on academic freedom,” said Gert Weisskirchen in Berlin. “Actions such as these that stifle critical dialogue are counterproductive to all attempts to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the Middle East. Of all countries in the Middle East, Israel is the leading arena for Jewish and Arab academics to work together in a spirit of cooperation and excellence.”

As a noted social scientist with a long college teaching record, Gert Weisskirchen warned that attempts to curtail the academic freedom of others can backfire on those institutions that launch calls for academic boycotts. He condemned all attempts at collective punishment for individual Israelis, due to the political situation in their region, recalling previous instances in which academics have discriminated against Israeli academics and students.

“A new chapter in the sad history of antisemitism in the academic sphere has been written by yesterday’s decision to boycott Israeli institutions,” according to Weisskirchen. He thanked the General Secretary of the UCU, Sally Hunt, for her public dissent against the boycott and her promise to hold a referendum on its implementation. He urged her to call the referendum as soon as possible to repair potential damage to the reputation of British academia.

Gert Weisskirchen, who is also the foreign policy spokesman for the German Social Democratic party, said that boycotts against Israel in the academic sphere are being misused as a tool to express political criticism. He warned against a potential increase in antisemitism on Jews worldwide when institutions and organizations adopt boycott strategies.