

British lecturers vote to boycott Israel

by UPI

LONDON -- Delegates to a British university lecturers' union meeting voted to support a boycott of Israeli universities to protest the treatment of Palestinians.

Jewish organizations criticized the 158-99 vote by delegates of the University and College Union, or UCU, the Times of London reported.

"This is a full-frontal assault on academic freedom. It defies common sense and undermines the priorities and freedoms on which British academia is based," Jeremy Newmark, chief executive of the Jewish Leadership Council, said.

The UCU delegates, who represent more than 120,000 academics, approved a boycott motion that criticizes Israel for denying Palestinians their educational rights.

The UCU is a new union formed by the merger of the Association of University Lecturers and National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education. Both unions supported and dropped boycotts in the past.

The UCU must now circulate details on the boycott to its membership. Newmark demanded that UCU leader Sally Hunt hold a referendum before implementing the boycott.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

British lecturers vote to boycott Israel by UPI