

24 October 2007  
Knesset Member Tzipi Livni  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Jerusalem

## Honorable Foreign Minister,

Re: Declaration of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) against imposing an academic boycott

Over the past year the State of Israel has been forced to contend with a malicious attack of the Universities and Colleges Union that threatened to impose an academic boycott on Israeli academics and academic institutions. This attack stemmed from anti-Israeli political motives not even remotely related to the academic world.

Following extensive international activity on the part of the State of Israel and its friends in the world, we were recently informed that the British academic boycott has been lifted. However, in recent weeks we were notified that the initiators of the British boycott have not given up as yet and have resumed their efforts to impose an academic boycott against Israel.

Against the backdrop of these events I am happy to inform you of a significant achievement gained at the latest meeting of the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) held in Brussels several days ago. CPME is a policy-setting organization comprised of the medical associations of European Union countries and representing 2 million physicians. The Israeli Medical Association (IMA) holds observer status in this organization since 2003, participates in annual meetings and contributes and responds to the organization's position papers and policy formulation.

At its recent meeting the CPME adopted and ratified the declaration submitted by the IMA firmly rejecting the imposition of future academic boycotts. The decision states that academic institutions must uphold the values and principles of liberty, tolerance and respect for all human beings and must act to enhance understanding and respect for scientific and academic achievements in the world irrespective of race, sex or nationality. The decision further states that imposing an academic boycott or undertaking any other action aimed at discrimination based on race, religion, sex or nationality constitutes a threat to academic freedom and to progress.

Adoption of this declaration not only ensures that European physicians will not join the potential academic boycott against Israel, it also paves the way for additional academic institutions to join the decision to condemn an academic boycott on any country in the world.

We hope that we will soon hear of the final waning of the attempt to impose an academic boycott on Israel. ■

Sincerely,  
Dr. Yoram Blachar  
IMA President

## Shimon Peres appoints Hadassah's Prof. Abramsky

President Shimon Peres has named Professor Oded Abramsky, MD., PHD, to head Israel's National Council for Research and Development. Prof Abramsky continues to serve as a senior physician and researcher in the Department of Neurology at Hadassah University Medical Center in Jerusalem.

The Council for Research and Development was established by the Knesset in 2004, and its members are appointed by the president of Israel.

The council's mission is to:

- Advise the government of Israel on the organization and regulation of civil research and development, and the allocation of budgets for its enhancement.
- Recommend to the government on guidelines for a comprehensive national policy, annual as well as perennial, in the field of civil research and development.

- Recommend to the government areas of national priority in civil research and development.
- Recommend to the government a basis for establishing infrastructure for research and development, and implementing scientific and technological projects.
- Recommend to the government and other relevant authorities principles on governmental research and development, including establishing government research institutions, and also suggest the professional criteria for appointing chief scientists in government departments, and heads of governmental research institutes.

Prof. Abramsky is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of the United Kingdom and a member of the Institute of Medicine of the American National Academy of Sciences. ■