

Peaceful Collaborations Deserve Support

Wladyslaw Altermann

THE FORMER RAND AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY, now University of Johannesburg, has acted against its own and the South African national interest by terminating the 25-year-old collaboration with the Ben Gurion University of the Negev (Around the World item “End to partnership with Israeli university,” News of the Week, 1 April, p. 19). Boycotts of Israeli scientists, science institutions, and worse, research cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis [e.g., (1)] are counterproductive—they deprive those less fortunate of a chance for improvement in education, and they promote confrontation and tension between Arab and Israeli societies. Because of the political pressure they face, collaborative programs are dwindling. We should show strong **support** for the excellent examples of **peaceful** collaboration between Israeli and Palestinian scientists [e.g., (2–4)] as well as with scientists of other nations [e.g., (5, 6)].

References

1. J. Giles, *Nature* **434**, 813 (2005).
2. T. Hershman, *Science*, **301**, 303 (2003).
3. N. El-Awady, “Israeli-Palestinian research: Walking on eggshells,” *Science and Development Network* (11 August 2006); www.scidev.net/en/features/israelipalestinian-research-walking-on-eggshells.html.
4. J. Kestler-D'Amours, “Al-Quds University flouts own academic boycott,” *The Electronic Intifada* (6 August 2010); <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article11447.shtml>.
5. “Al-Quds University, Research, International Opportunities, Cooperation Agreements (www.alquds.edu/en/research/international-opportunities.html).
6. H. Skinner *et al.*, *Lancet* **365**, 1274 (2005)

+ Author Affiliations

Kumba-Exxaro Chair in Geodynamics, University of Pretoria, Hatfield, 0028, South Africa.
E-mail: wladyslaw.altermann@up.ac.za