B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

His Excellency Manuel Valls
Prime Minister
Paris, France

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

On behalf of B'nai B'rith International's more than 200,000 members and supporters around the globe, we write to express our deep dismay upon learning that Orange mobile firm CEO Stephane Richard has pledged to cut ties with an Israeli partner.

Boycotts of Israel are a favorite weapon of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, whose aim is to isolate Israel in the international community and brand it as a pariah state. We deeply hope that Orange, a company in which the French government is a 25 percent shareholder, will not join the ranks of Israel's outspoken enemies – those who employ a double standard against the Jewish state by ignoring actual human rights atrocities while focusing their ire on the only democracy in the Middle East.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have been a loud and clear voice in condemning anti-Semitism and deploring the tactics of those who hide "behind a fake anti-Zionism." Your words echo those of the European Union's former Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, which noted in its 2005 working definition of anti-Semitism, "Manifestations could also target the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity."

In singling out the Jewish state for vociferous one-sided condemnation, those who would alienate the Jewish state and undermine its existence have morally compromised themselves. Whenever institutions or individuals attempt to blacklist Israel, they should be met with the common opprobrium of the democratic world.

We call on the government of France to forcefully renounce Mr. Richard's remarks and to underscore that boycotts of Israel can neither be justified nor tolerated.

Respectfully,

Allan J. Jacobs
President

Daniel S. Mariaschin
Executive Vice President