

Motion On Solidarity with Palestine

This Union Notes:

Currently, neither Goldsmiths University nor Students' Union has released a statement condemning the actions of Israel and calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. The recent hearings at the ICJ on 26 January have confirmed the plausibility of the case of genocide presented by South Africa.

The escalation of violence in Gaza and occupied Palestine including the bombing of homes, schools, ambulances and hospitals and the growing death toll of over 27,000. Israel is continuing its genocide of Palestinians in Gaza despite a global mass mobilisation in solidarity with Palestine calling for an immediate ceasefire, an end to the siege on Gaza, and lifting the air, land, and sea blockade.

On top of providing unconditional economic, political, military and ideological support for Israel, the US and the UK have now become active players in this war by starting a bombing campaign against Yemen rather than stopping the genocide in Gaza. Three-quarters of all Britons call for a ceasefire, but Rishi Sunak's Conservative and Keir Starmer's Labour parties back Israel's genocide, settler destruction and ethnic cleansing in Gaza.

Israel's destruction of educational infrastructure includes every university in Gaza and over 4,000 students and at least 94 university professors have been killed by the Israeli army. Students and faculty in Britain are under scrutiny, surveillance and are targeted by the government, universities, and the media for expressing solidarity with Palestinians.

Goldsmiths University has adopted intimidation tactics in response to walk-outs held in solidarity with Palestine. Goldsmiths University investment of £30,134 in Nice Ltd., a global software and artificial intelligence company formed by Unit 8200 of the IDF, whose clients have supplied military technology used in Israel's militarised repression of Palestinians. The existing SU motions: Boycotts, Divestments and Sanctions (BDS) of Israeli apartheid and Boycott Prevent.

This Union Believes:

Palestinians have a right to resist Israeli settler colonialism and occupation under international law as United Nations (UN) general assembly resolution 37/43 affirms "the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial and foreign domination and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle".

Israel was formed through the ethnic cleansing of almost one million Palestinians in 1948, known as the "Nakba" or catastrophe.

Israel occupied what remained of Palestinian land in 1967, and continues ethnic cleansing and annexation to the present in violation of international law.

The Israeli government is implementing collective punishment on the inhabitants of Gaza and this comes in the context of over 75 years of settler colonialism and escalating Israeli violence in Gaza, the West Bank and around the Al Aqsa mosque.

Targeting of students, societies and academic individuals and organisations who speak up against genocide is part of a full-frontal attack by the UK government on personal and academic freedoms.

The attempt to conflate anti-zionism and legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism must be resisted, as this does disservice to the antiracist movement and undermines academic freedom and freedom of speech.

We must take an uncompromising position against all forms of racism, including islamophobia and antisemitism.

Goldsmiths University has a moral and political responsibility to speak out against injustice, apartheid and genocide. Students have the right to protest on campus, and this right should be protected.

This Union Resolves:

1. To declare its solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people against occupation, to call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the genocidal violence in Gaza and to call on its members to support Palestinian liberation.
2. To support Goldsmiths students in their efforts to campaign and demonstrate for the liberation of the Palestinian people.
3. To reaffirm and call for the UK government to recognise the right of Palestinians to freedom, self-determination and return.
4. Goldsmiths SU to join Goldsmiths students for Palestine and Goldsmiths UCU in signing the "Letter to management" and lobby the management on the following demands laid out in the letter:
 - a. Goldsmiths SMT must issue a new statement calling for an immediate ceasefire, whilst condemning in no uncertain terms Israel's genocidal activities, the deliberate assassinations of students and university workers, and the destruction of Gaza's educational infrastructure.
 - b. The above statement must commit Goldsmiths to uphold academic freedom and freedom of expression as one of its core values.
 - c. Unequivocally uphold students' right to protest, participate in walk outs, and demonstrate against apartheid, illegal occupation, settler colonialism, ethnic cleansing, and genocide and criticise the state of Israel; it must also unequivocally uphold the right of staff to support students who choose to utilise these rights.

- d. Officially commit to assisting in the rebuilding of Gazan educational infrastructures. This would include establishing links and partnerships with Palestinian universities in the form of exchange programs, efforts to preserve archives and the re-establishment/expansion of scholarships for Palestinian students.
 - e. Provide full transparency of all current and future financial investments to demonstrate compliance with Goldsmiths ethical investment policy. In line with previous commitments to divest from fossil fuel and maintain an ethical investment portfolio, we demand an equal commitment to the policy/guidelines outlined in the BDS movement
 - i. Immediate divestment from current investment in the surveillance company Nice Ltd. totalling £30,134
 - ii. Audit all HP packard equipment and technical services and cancel any outstanding orders.
 - f. Expedite the review and removal of the IHRA definition of antisemitism; adopted by the College in June 2022. We demand that this take place immediately and that the Jerusalem Declaration definition is kept and implemented.
5. To submit this motion to the National Union of Students and call on it to publicly support the Palestinian struggle and oppose British imperialism's role in the oppression of the Palestinian people.