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**AP** Associated Press

## UC president condemns anti-Israel acts on campus

By TERENCE CHEA, Associated Press  
Thursday, March 8, 2012

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(03-08) 18:10 PST San Francisco, CA (AP) --

The head of the [University of California](#) on Thursday condemned recent anti-Israel incidents on UC campuses and called for greater tolerance and civility.

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In an open letter, UC President Mark Yudof denounced hecklers who disrupted an event called "Israeli Soldiers Speak Out" at UC Davis last week, saying it was reprehensible that one protester linked the speakers to rapists and murderers.

The university president also spoke out against vandals who defaced an Israeli flag, displayed by the Jewish student group Hillel, with the word "terrorist" at UC Riverside earlier this week.

Yudof called on students, faculty and staff members to "foster a climate of tolerance, civility and open-mindedness."

"University campuses are proper venues for collisions of ideas and viewpoints," Yudof wrote. "What is not acceptable are acts meant to disrupt the speech of others."

Yudof published the open letter a day after the Amcha Initiative, which opposes anti-Jewish bigotry on campus, sent a letter to university leaders urging them to condemn recent anti-Israel incidents and create policies to protect Jewish students.

Amcha leaders claim that UC Davis police didn't do enough to stop pro-Palestinian protesters from disrupting the Feb. 27 event by heckling Israeli speakers and walking out in the middle of the talk.

The group also said Jewish students and faculty at UC San Diego were "harassed and bullied by pro-Palestinian supporters" during a Feb. 29 student council vote on a resolution calling for a boycott of American firms doing business with Israel.

"Jewish students have really felt unprotected," said Amcha founder Tammi Rossman-Benjamin, a lecturer at UC Santa Cruz, told The Associated Press on Thursday. "Their civil rights have been violated. Their right to safe environment has been violated."

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UC administrators are working on revising policies to improve campus climate for all students and prevent acts motivated by religious and racial bias, Yudof said.

In recent years, a number of incidents have raised concerns about anti-Semitism and other forms of racial and ethnic intolerance at the 10-campus UC system.

Last year, 10 Muslim students were convicted of misdemeanors for disrupting a speech by Israeli Ambassador Michael Oren at UC Irvine in February 2010.

Two Jewish students at UC Berkeley filed a lawsuit last year claiming the school wasn't doing enough to curb harassment during pro-Palestinian protests on campus. A federal judge dismissed the complaint in December.

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