

The statement below, signed by Rutgers University faculty members, was originally acquired from public links [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

AMCHA Initiative Note: The [Palestine & Praxis](#) open letter endorsed in the statement below includes a commitment to academic BDS, which, if put into effect, would restrict the educational opportunities and academic freedom of students and faculty who want to study about or in Israel.

Rutgers University Faculty Stand in Solidarity with the Palestinian People

May 2021

We stand in Solidarity with the Palestinian People

Rutgers University faculty condemn Israel's military assault against the Palestinian people across all Palestinian geographies. We join and welcome the endorsement of all colleagues committed to combatting racism, colonialism, and settler colonialism.

A ceasefire does not end the colonial conditions of structural violence and inequality that Palestinians live under. The fifteen year siege of and systemic war on Gaza are part of a long-standing effort to isolate, dehumanize, and punish Palestinians for resisting decades of occupation and what UN ESCWA, Human Rights Watch and the Israeli human rights organization B'tselem, have called an Israeli Apartheid regime.

The forced displacement of Palestinian families from occupied East Jerusalem, including Sheikh Jarrah, takes legal, bureaucratic, and military forms. Zionist settler colonial expansion marks Palestinian homes and neighborhoods for removal, destruction, and replacement while military and settler infrastructure limits Palestinian mobility and segregates them into Bantustans. Critical resources such as water and land are expropriated by the Israeli state. These tactics are part of a broader effort to deny the possibility of Palestinian self-determination in Palestine.

The Palestinian rights to freedom, security in their homes, to return, self-determination, and to be free of violent occupation are well established under international law. The language of both-sidedness, of timeless or religious 'conflict' with moments of 'escalation' erases the military, economic, media, and diplomatic power that Israel, as an occupying force has over Palestine. While we mourn the loss of civilian life in Israel, we also refuse to engage narratives that demand

an 'equal sides' approach to a fundamentally unequal reality.

The demand to center Israel's right to 'self-defense' erases the colonial context and delegitimizes the Palestinian right to resistance and to self-defense, both principles enshrined in international law. It also neglects non-violent tactics and campaigns, such as BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions), and civil disobedience that Palestinians have used for decades to dismantle the system around them. We stand in solidarity with a growing chorus of voices in the US media, in universities, activists and social movements, and with progressive political leaders in the US government. With them, we demand an end to US' long-standing military, economic, and diplomatic support for unchecked Israeli anti-Palestinian violence.

We are in awe of the Palestinian struggle to resist violent occupation, removal, erasure, and the expansion of Israeli settler colonialism. As faculty at an institution committed to the principles of social justice and academic excellence, particularly those of us who study and teach about the Middle East or Racism, we endorse the Palestine and Praxis call to action. We affirm our own commitments to speaking out in defense of the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people as well as foundational principles of scholarly integrity and academic freedom. We recognize our role and responsibility as scholars to theorize, read, teach and write about the very issues unfolding in Palestine. Not doing so means we fail to provide our undergraduate and graduate students, including Palestinian and Israeli students, with the critical tools and information they need to understand and engage the subjects of Palestine and Israel, colonialism, US empire, and anti-racism. Those who do not study these issues can be involved in study groups, teach-ins, and other such educational activities as faculty and students were during other moments of international protest and solidarity, like protests against the Vietnam War and Apartheid South Africa.

Therefore, we stand in solidarity with Palestinians and their Jewish as well as non-Jewish allies around the world, understanding that their struggle is inseparable from other movements for equality, justice and liberation both within the United States and globally. We join together in rededicating ourselves to working against all forms of racism, imperialism, colonialism, settler colonialism and injustice at Rutgers, in the classroom, on campus, and beyond.

Signatories

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