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Not In Our Name: Anti-Zionist Jewish Coalition at CUNY

[If you are a Jewish student, worker, or alumni, or an organization (Jewish or Non-Jewish) that wishes to demonstrate your solidarity with Palestine liberation organizing at CUNY and opposition to the weaponization of antisemitism to undermine this organizing, please sign! [sign here](#)]

We, the Jewish students, staff, faculty, and alumni of City University of New York, stand with the Palestinian community of CUNY, the [7 million](#) Palestinian refugees, and the Palestinians within the occupied land of Palestine against the Israeli settler colonial regime.

We stand with the growing movement at CUNY for Palestinian freedom that includes CUNY4Palestine, Within Our Lifetime (with emphasis on Nerdeen Kiswani who faces multiple smear campaigns from homegrown Zionists within CUNY and outside of it with zero support from the CUNY administration), and all Palestinian solidarity groups within CUNY without question.

Palestinian voices are at the core of our coalition and we stand to uphold their demands for global liberation, resistance by any means necessary, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, the return of all land prior to 1948, and ending the occupation. We commit to Palestinian liberation as defined by Palestinians. These principles are **not** negotiable.

We vehemently stand against the Zionist movement within CUNY that aims to criminalize and demonize Palestinian students and workers. Furthermore, we stand against liberal Zionist entities that falsely classify themselves as anti-Zionist as they perform apologia for Israeli settler colonial rule.

The CUNY administration, as recently as 2014, invested at least \$1,093,900 in companies that actively support Israeli apartheid and genocide, including weapons manufacturers such as Boeing, General Electric, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and Raytheon; tech and

security companies such as Hewlett-Packard Enterprise, G4S, and Motorola Solutions; and construction firms such as Caterpillar and Cemex.

As recently as this year (2022), 12 CUNY Presidents and Deans went to the illegitimate state of Israel with the CUNY Chancellor under the premise of [“building bridges”](#). This was an act of ultimate betrayal towards Palestinian students, workers, and their allies. This trip whitewashes the suffering of Palestinian oppression and significantly undermines the Palestinian struggle against a nuclear powered, highly militarized, and imperialist backed settler colonial state.

Many Jewish CUNY students and workers collectively and publicly opposed this trip whitewashing apartheid as well as other attempts by the administration to further institutional ties with the settler colonial state. However, the CUNY administration works to silence Jewish anti-Zionist students and workers while aligning itself with Zionist organizations like Hillel, a known anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, Islamophobic, and anti-Palestinian organization, which furthers the vulnerability of these racialized communities already battling systemic racism at CUNY.

As proud members of the Jewish community, we wholeheartedly denounce any attempts to equate Zionism to Judaism or Jewish life. We define Zionism as a 125-year-old political ideology built with inspiration from European colonialism, ethnic nationalism, and white supremacy since its conception. It is an ideology that continues to justify and normalize acts of [genocide](#) and [ethnic cleansing](#) upon the people of Palestine and targets Palestinians and their allies globally. All of which is backed by [United States imperialism](#).

Zionism is **not** a liberation movement or a movement of self-determination. These terms are co-opted and weaponized by Zionists to justify [ongoing settler expansion](#) on the indigenous Palestinian population and is a part of Israel’s rebranding strategy known as “Brand Israel” in order to appeal to liberal masses in Western countries.

The settler colonial apartheid regime does not speak for Jews nor does it embrace any metric of Jewish value. It is imperative that anti-zionist Jews organize to challenge the monopoly over Judaism that the settler colonial apartheid regime claims and continuations of that narrative that are permeating throughout CUNY. We must organize within the Jewish community to uphold and continue the long history of radical Jewish struggle against state tyranny and for liberation.

The illegitimate state of Israel betrays every metric of Jewish values as it commits genocide within the land of Palestine, [funds](#) Nazi militia groups abroad, [arms fascists](#) oppressing liberation revolutionary groups, inspires [fascist](#) regimes and white supremacists globally, and [oppresses Black](#) and Brown Jews of Color within the settler colonial state of Israel.

The idea that Israel is representative of Jews enforces the antisemitic idea that we are a monolith, reinforces the idea that Israel's [violence](#) towards Palestinians, [even in death](#), is in line with Jewish values, and upholds the racist narrative that Jewish safety comes at the expense of Palestinian lives and [land](#).

We remember the long line of Jewish revolutionaries and Jewish dissent against Zionism. We mirror their aspirations by shaping our platform on anti-imperialism, anti-racism, and radical love. Jewish tradition is shaped by promising a better world for the future- Tikkun Olam is for all. As people who have undergone repeated state sanctioned pogroms, ethnic cleansings, and genocide, we work to prevent a world that imposes that onto others.

Never again means never again for anyone.

Therefore, we pledge to:

- Create networks and programs within the CUNY Jewish population to question, critique, and unlearn Zionism so they may form their own Jewish identity.
- Encourage hosting anti-Zionist Jewish professionals to come speak on CUNY campuses to show young adult Jewish youth that Zionism is not the only way and that for as long as Zionism has existed, anti-Zionism was right along with it.
- Wholeheartedly endorse the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) of the settler colonial and apartheid state Israel without question and back all efforts to establish it within CUNY.
- Stand against the IHRA working "definition" of antisemitism as it is a ploy to demonize anti-zionist and Palestinian freedom of speech against the settler colonial and apartheid state of Israel and does nothing to protect Jewish students.
- Be a strong, loud, and visual Jewish opposition to right wing Zionist organizations falsely equating anti-Zionism with antisemitism.
- Stand against all methods of normalization with Zionist entities and organizations.
- Stand in solidarity with all students and workers organizing to establish networks of safety, security, and legislation aimed at protecting and uplifting Palestinian students and workers.
- Fight against city, state, and national government attempts to block Palestinian liberation.

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CUNY SIGNATORIES

1. Erica Calabrese, John Jay College, CUNY Student
2. Corinna Mullin, John Jay College, CUNY Faculty
3. Sofya Aptekar, SLU, CUNY Faculty
4. Mitchell Kaye, CUNY Law, CUNY Alumn
5. Petra, CSI, CUNY Student
6. Laura Hooberman, Graduate Center, CUNY Student
7. Andrew Berezhansky, John Jay College, CUNY Alumn
8. Laura Kaplan, Graduate Center, CUNY Alumn
9. Jeszie, City College, CUNY Student
10. Courtney Pourgol, Hunter College, CUNY Student
11. Adina Marx-Arpadi, CUNY Law, CUNY Alumn
12. Sherry Millner, CUNY Staten Island. CUNY Faculty
13. Suzanne Adely, CUNY Law, CUNY Alumn
14. Hester Eisenstein, Queens College/Graduate Center, CUNY Faculty
15. Renate Bridenthal, Brooklyn College, CUNY Faculty
16. Samantha Lilienfeld, Graduate Center, CUNY Alumn
17. Elizabeth Oram, Hunter College, CUNY Faculty
18. Naomi Schiller, Brooklyn College/Graduate Center, CUNY Faculty
19. Mark Levine, Hunter College, CUNY Alumn
20. Nancy Stern, City College of New York, CUNY Faculty
21. Howard Pflanzner, Bronx Community College, CUNY Faculty
22. Evan Litwaxk, Lehman College, CUNY Staff
23. Immanuel Ness, Brooklyn College, CUNY Faculty
24. Avi Kuighadush, Queens College, CUNY Student
25. Bronislaw Czarnocha, Hostos, CUNY Faculty
26. Jane Guskin, Queens College, CUNY Faculty
27. Leigha Gillespie, CUNY Law, CUNY Alumn
28. Sholom Sandalow, Brooklyn College, CUNY Alumn
29. Carol Lang, Bronx Community College, CUNY Faculty
30. Frances Zusman, John Jay College, CUNY Student

CUNY ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

1. League of Young Communists
2. Rank and File Action

NON-CUNY SIGNATORIES

1. Asantewaa Nkrumah-Ture, Black Alliance For Peace
2. Ronnie Barkan, Palestine Action/BDS
3. Stanley Cohen, Attorney
4. Victoria Chapman, Customer Service Representative
5. Audrey Bomse, Attorney from the National Lawyers Guild

NON-CUNY ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENT

1. National Lawyers Guild, Palestine Sub-Committee