

This resolution was written by CUNY for Palestine as a response to the New York City Council “hearing” on anti-semitism and the resolution “calling upon the City University of New York to compile data on bias incidents and hate crimes” presented by council members Eric Dinwoitz and Gale Brewer. CUNY for Palestine views this hearing as part of a manufactured zionist backlash against a highly successful year of organizing, and growing support for Palestinian liberation as well as coalition building with other anti-racist and social justice groups organizing within the CUNY community. The below resolution details numerous incidents of racism, particularly anti-Palestinian racism, across CUNY that are intentionally obscured by this sham hearing. It announces a People’s Hearing to bring to light these incidents as well as other forms of institutional racism at CUNY and to demand action from the administration.

Whereas, institutional racism, also known as systemic racism, is a form of racism that is embedded in the laws, regulations, practices and discourses of an institution;

Whereas, anti-Palestinian racism is a form of racism that [silences, excludes, erases, stereotypes, defames, or dehumanizes Palestinians](#);

Whereas, for years CUNY leadership has tolerated and facilitated [the stifling of Palestine solidarity organizing and anti-Palestinian racism at CUNY](#);

Whereas, students and faculty speaking out about Palestine, particularly Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and other students of color, have been [harassed](#), [surveilled](#), and [defamed](#) by [Zionist organizations as well as the NYPD and FBI](#);

Whereas, CUNY administration has either [remained silent or been complicit](#) in this repression of organizing in solidarity with Palestine liberation, imposing bureaucratic burdens and administrative obstacles not faced by students organizing around any other issues on campus;

Whereas, [despite the extensive evidence of anti-Palestinian racism at CUNY](#), we have yet to see the CUNY Chancellor issue a statement on this, or any interest expressed by New York City or State officials concerning an investigation into the causes and impact of anti-Palestinian racism at CUNY;

Whereas, despite the rise of anti-Black racism at CUNY, including the [violently racist anti-Black and antisemitic vandalism attack on Delany Hall at Queens College](#)--home of the SEEK program and a racial justice hub for the campus--that took place on January 6 of this year, a subsequent telephone threat against a Black faculty member there, the anti-Black bomb threat that briefly shut down York College on March 7, or anti-Black racism at CUNY Law as documented by the New York Times, among many examples of institutional and private racism across CUNY, we have yet to see the CUNY Chancellor issue a statement on this, or any interest expressed by New York City or State officials concerning an investigation into the causes and impact of anti-Black racism at CUNY;

Whereas, zionist attacks on CUNY organizers can be traced back decades, the past year witnessed an uptick, including defamation, character assassination, and harassment, following the [successful mobilizations of spring 2021](#) against Israel's accelerated settler colonial and apartheid violence;

Whereas, anti-Palestinian forces initiated a well-funded and highly organized campaign establishing groups like the [Resign.PSC](#), which urges union members to resign, as well as [CUNY Alliance for Inclusion](#) and [SAFE CUNY](#), which have further contributed to the existing fears and vulnerability of (specifically) Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim CUNY students and workers;

Whereas, the backlash includes [a lawsuit filed by six CUNY professors](#) against the PSC, claiming the organization is “anti-Semitic and anti-Israel and that a New York state law prevents them from ending their association with the PSC;”

Whereas, the backlash includes such sustained attacks on Palestinian students and other organizers amounting to defamation and harassment, as the following:

- On **May 17**, the day after the CUNY Law Faculty resolution in support of the CUNY law student BDS resolution, Nerdeen Kiswani gave the student commencement speech for the day-time graduating class of 2022. When news of her planned speech reached people outside the CUNY Law community, a Twitter campaign was incited to [bar her speech](#) or to have CUNY Chancellor [Felix V. Matos Rodriguez condemn](#) the Law School's commencement program;
- [A petition organized by a group called “Israel War Room”](#) targeted Nerdeen with harassment and defamation, calling on CUNY Law to reject Nerdeen as a commencement speaker;
- Since recordings of Nerdeen's speech have circulated, zionist [Twitter accounts](#), like @SAFECUNY, targeted Nerdeen with harassment and defamation accusing her of being a “violence inciting [sic] Jew-hater;”

Whereas, the CUNY administration has done nothing to alleviate the fears of CUNY student and worker organizers about the rising climate of anti-Palestinian racism on campus, and failed to respond to a [letter written by CUNY4Palestine](#) in **June 2021** calling on the administration to declare their support for CUNY's Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim students;

Whereas, many CUNY students are traumatized by having to witness Israel's brutal oppression and dispossession of the Palestinian people—a trauma which is deepened by having [their organizing in response to this violence](#) ignored, or even condemned, by CUNY leadership;

Whereas, the CUNY administration's complete disregard for the position of CUNY workers and students in solidarity with Palestine as expressed in the [Professional Staff Congress Resolution in Support of the Palestinian People](#), [CUNY Law student government](#) and [faculty resolutions](#) on BDS, various statements and other forms of organizing around CUNY campuses was made apparent when it announced the Chancellor's April 2022 “[Scholars as Bridge Builders](#)” trip to Israel—a trip condemned by a large group of Palestinian academics, including The Palestinian

Federation of Unions of University Professors and Employees, as [“Scholars as Apartheid Builders;”](#)

Whereas, the Chancellor, along with twelve college Presidents and Deans, engaged in a publicity tour designed to whitewash Israel’s settler colonial violence and domination, including over Palestinian higher education institutions, as demonstrated by [a new military order](#) further restricting Palestinian rights to education and undermining the academic freedom and autonomy of Palestinian institutions of higher education;

Whereas, the most recent examples of the CUNY administration’s complicity in the repression of Palestine solidarity organizing across CUNY and the rising climate of anti-Palestinian racism on campus include [the John Jay College administration’s decision to effectively cancel the Palestine Lives May 14th 2022 conference](#) and Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez’s decision to participate in [the sham City Council hearing on anti-semitism at CUNY](#) that was originally scheduled to take place on June 8th 2022;

Whereas, New York City Councilmember and Higher Education Committee Chair Eric Dinowitz [acknowledges](#) the June 30th hearing on anti-semitism is a direct response to “the embracement and normalization of BDS by both CUNY students and faculty [which] has fostered an extremely hostile campus environment that has resulted in the more blatant forms of Anti-Semitism that are becoming all too common in our city;”

Whereas, New York City Council and Higher Education Committee member Inna Vernikov—who solicited testimony of antisemitism on college campuses for the June 30th hearing—claims to have withdrawn financial support for CUNY Law in response to the faculty’s unanimous support for students’ BDS resolution, [remarking](#) “It seems as if antisemitism is the only politically acceptable form of racism which exists. We must stop handing out free passes to anti-Semites like candy;”

Whereas, [for decades](#), [grassroots Palestinian organizers](#) have [roundly rejected anti-Semitism](#), understanding that Palestinian liberation and [dismantling anti-Semitism](#) are [intertwined project](#) and that the growing grassroots movement for Palestinian freedom is concerned with the liberation of all people everywhere;

Whereas, the notion that the safety of one group necessitates stifling the freedom of another group is both false and offensive;

Be it resolved, that CUNY for Palestine invites the CUNY administration to learn from our intersectional approach: no one is free until everyone is free;

Be it resolved, that—in the spirit of public education—CUNY for Palestine will hold a People’s Hearing to bring to light all the examples of anti-Palestinian, anti-Black, and all other forms of racism detailed in this resolution and to demand action from the administration.