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To the University of California Community,

We write this statement as academic workers, students, faculty, alumni, and affiliates in Ethnic and Gender Studies programs across the UC system in solidarity with the Palestinian people and their struggle against a genocidal military occupation. As we witness the atrocities taking place in occupied Palestine, many of which have been ongoing for the last 75 years, we have watched as our campus leadership continues to ignore and/or disparage the struggle of Palestinian people for liberation and against their annihilation. We do not condone violence toward Palestinian students from Zionist supporters on UC campuses, which took place in the last few days and in past instances where pro Palestinian solidarity rallies, meetings, or events have taken place. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the UC's failure to create a safe environment for Palestinian students and their supporters. For example, people at UCLA have been shoved, hit, spit on, called derogatory names and violently harassed by Zionist students. The climate at the UC system is so hostile that one student had a knife to their throat, which didn't elicit any of the usual public safety emails, texts or notifications. It is evident, at this time, that the UC system privileges the protection of those communities that benefit from their multimillion dollar military investments.

We hold the ongoing, 75-year occupation and settler colonial violence to blame for all violent struggle that is currently taking place on Palestinian lands. More specifically, we join a growing international chorus of voices holding the Zionist Israeli government accountable for the violence that we have witnessed over the last several days. Gazans have been living in the world's largest "[open air prison](#)," where they are subjected to daily acts of violence by soldiers from the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). To blame anyone other than the Zionist Israeli government and its settlers mischaracterizes this struggle and fuels the ongoing violence. Although international law states that Palestinians' have the right to defend themselves in their ancestral homelands, it is evident these rights only apply to some.

To police Palestinian means of resistance and demand that they be perfect victims and resistant subjects is part of the genocidal campaign against Palestinians, and demonstrates a lack of understanding of [the reality on the ground](#). The obsession in Western media and academia with 'condemning Hamas' relies on an equivocation of violence between the oppressor and the oppressed. The loss of innocent life anywhere for any reason is abhorrent. To claim that the loss of civilian life on 'both' sides is commensurate in scale (how many have died) or degree (where they might have to flee, access to humanitarian resources) is effectively a re-articulation of 'All Lives Matter' in a wartime context, a moral truism uttered to distract from the ongoing extermination of a people. Yet, all this must be placed in the context of Hamas' formation and maintenance, which are directly linked to the state of Israel. Hamas is a result of the systematic annihilation of other Palestinian resistance groups, including the withdrawal of support for the Palestinian Liberation Organization, thus Israel is responsible for [the retaliation of its own making](#). Without the occupation, Hamas would not persist. Without the systematic elimination of other resistance movements—some which may have been more palatable for the Western liberal, leftist, or supposedly decolonial academics—Hamas would not persist. In the [words of Benjamin Netanyahu](#) himself, without Israeli intervention, Hamas would not have survived. To equate Palestinian

resistance with one group is to once more project imperial logics of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ actors onto a geopolitical reality that is [far more complicated](#).

We call for all UC campuses, departments, scholars and staff to recognize that the Israeli government, through the use of bureaucratic violence, police and military surveillance, and legal discrimination have long enacted an apartheid state in which Palestinian life is disposable and Palestinian land ripe for theft. Let this be clear: Israel is an apartheid state. Since the 1948 [Nakba](#), which resulted in the ethnic cleansing and forced removal of over 750,000 Palestinians from their own land and a redrawing of the Palestine/ Israel border, the Western world has been complicit in this colonial violence by refusing to name it as such. We, the undersigned, refuse to engage in the discourse of terrorism in regards to Palestinian struggle. We acknowledge that this fight for freedom is one against racist and ethnonationalist extremism.

The virulent spread of [disinformation](#)—[unsubstantiated accounts](#) of sexual assault and mutilated children—[parroted at the highest levels of government despite media retractions](#), is nothing more than the regurgitation of centuries-old orientalist, colonialist, and Islamophobic tropes which work to manufacture consent to flatten Gaza. In fact, much of the recent misinformation we saw in the media was a manipulation of the atrocities committed *against* Palestinians, such as the [Sabra and Shatila massacres](#).’ As [stated](#) by the Israeli War Minister—the Israeli government believes they are fighting animals, not people. Dehumanization is a common practice of settler colonialism in order to justify deeming colonized people as disposable epistemically and ontologically.

We strongly condemn the University of California's attempt to reproduce Western media’s narrative of ongoing violence in Palestine, which includes the victimization of Israeli women and children to manufacture consent for intervention and further violence against Palestinians. As scholars working at the intersection of Ethnic and Gender Studies, the current moment recalls for us the [femonationalist](#) rhetoric used to justify war with Afghanistan, when media outlets in government institutions called for U.S. intervention to save innocent women and children from terrorist forces. This statement recognizes and condemns the weaponization of this moment by other ethnonationalist and nativist movements like the [Hindutva](#) (or Hindu nationalism) to [further Islamophobia and violence against Kashmiris](#) (living under Indian settler colonial occupation) as well as Indian Muslims, who are facing an ongoing genocide in India. As they continue to rely on the circulation of Israeli and Western mis-and-disinformation, we reject their legitimization of such violence. We urge the community to practice critical media literacy when consuming mainstream media stories of violence against women and children committed by Palestinian resisters which serve to frame Palestinian freedom fighters as evil, monstrous “terrorists.” These justifications are ahistorical and erase the violence that racialized women and children face daily under occupation. Similarly, to globally label Palestinian rebels as rapists marginalizes a real, ongoing pattern of gendered violence against Palestinian women by Israeli Defense Forces as part of its ongoing occupation for the past 75 years. Are Palestinian women and girls not worthy of empathy, too?

As academic workers and educators, it is our duty to speak up about the injustices that we teach our students, despite the [concerted, hostile climate of repression and doxing being cultivated by Zionists](#), which is happening with the license of our university leadership. We ask, how can a community of scholars and university workers, in good moral conscience, teach our students to recognize patterns of propaganda and genocide but remain silent while these very patterns are being repeated by mainstream

media and campus communications? We challenge the way Palestinian freedom struggle has been talked about under the rubric of terrorism while Israeli occupation and military violence goes unchecked with impunity and backed by billions of U.S. dollars, *which includes UC funding*. It is this narrative that has not allowed for the critical analysis needed to understand the Palestinian struggle as part of a legacy of anti-colonial, anti-apartheid, anti-capitalist fights for freedom.

As it attempts to reckon with its legacy as a [land-grab institution](#), the University of California must also reckon with its complicity in *ongoing* settler-colonial projects in the United States and abroad. [Land acknowledgements](#) are not enough if they are empty signifiers. For the last decade, [UC students in the nonviolent Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement](#) have compiled evidence of the UC's complicity as an extension of war and policing through its technologies, weapons, and tactics that are spread throughout Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Mauna Kea, Somalia, Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, native nations and reservations, Akwesasne of the Kanienkehaka (Mohawk) Nation, Chumash lands, San Diego, U.S. border lands, and Los Angeles. Through its University of California Retirement Plan (UCRP)—the UC's main investment vehicle—the UC has some of its largest holdings in the investment management firm BlackRock, the world's largest investor in weapons manufacturing and fossil fuel and Lockheed Martin, the largest defense contractor in the world and a top supplier of both the US military and police forces. Corporations like BlackRock and Lockheed Martin profit from the military and the police's slaughter of Black and brown civilians around the world. As we write this, [Lockheed Martin stock is experiencing its best day in years](#) amid the conflict – a big payday for the UC whose investments directly fuel military aggression and war crimes against innocents in Gaza and beyond.

This statement is nothing less than a call for Palestinian liberation. We refuse to use “both side” statements that equate the colonizer with the colonized. To equate the violence of the settler colonial project of Israel and by extension the U.S. and the West with Palestinian resistance is to intentionally forget the last 75 years of occupation—we as scholars refuse to do so and practice, in spite of the university, the act of bearing witness. We remember and become accomplices to liberation. At this time, we refuse any calls for “peace” which are just calls for the quiet submission of Palestinians to an early grave. As Kwame Ture taught us, peace is not liberation. We call on all UC faculty, students, affiliates, and organizations to [divest](#) from ethnic cleansing, occupation, and apartheid at the hands of the government of Israel now.

Signed,

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Lane Zajac, UCLA faculty

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Michael V. Singh, UC Davis

Jorge Ramirez-Lopez, UCLA

Maxwell Nelson, UCLA

Sherine Hafez, UCR

Aaron Benedetti, UC Davis

Laura Halcomb, UCSB

Gabriel Evans, UCSC

Mark Gergues, UCSF

Mark Gardner, UCSC

Emalee (UC Davis)

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Brandon Andrew Robinson, UCR

Afaf Moustafa, MD at UCLA

Ali Kheradyar, UCLA

Santiago Gonzalez, UCSF

meital yaniv

Yatta Kiazolu

Kriti Sharma, UCSC

Chelsea Kai Roesch, UC Santa Barbara

Cihangir, UCLA

erika roos, UCSD

The Greenhouse Project, UCSC

LuLing Osofsky, UC Santa Cruz

Sakura Price

Courtney Bonam, UCSC

Jovana Isevski

Stephanie Martinez UCSD

Maggie Logan

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Nica Giromini, UC Berkeley

Elyx Desloover, UC Davis

Ally Zlaket, English, UC Berkeley

Hannah Newcombe, UC Berkeley

Amy Juarez

Inés Hernández-Ávila, UC Davis

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Maria Montenegro, UC Irvine

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Yanilka Soto

Katherine Franco, UC Berkeley

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Olivia Lindsley, UCLA

Emma Howard, UCR

Erin Gray, Assistant Professor of American Studies, UC Davis

Baibhav S, UCSF

Bhargavi, UCSD

Sarah Zollweg UCLA
Georgia Valentine, UCB
Maryam Salehi, UCI
Xavier Livermon UC Santa Cruz
Kaiya Gordon, UCSC
UCLA Student
Paulina Cardenas; UC Santa Cruz
Shannon Bae UCI
Sara Cantor - EBCLC, UC Berkeley affiliate
Angela Pastorelli-Sosa, UC Berkeley
Yani Alexander UC Berkeley
Lina Afonso, UCSF
Silvia Rodríguez Vega UCSB
Mark Minch-de Leon, UC Riverside
Kelsey Moore, UCSB
Jonah Gray, UCSD
Iris Morrell, UCI
Mariah Webber - UCSB
Ahmed Adam, UCI
Joseph Serrano, UC Berkeley
Leslie Fernandez UCR
Patrick Lawton UCR
Rebekah Kaump, UC Davis
Leah Jacobson, UCLA
Chelsea UCR
Fred DeVeaux, UCLA
Jacqueline Aguirre, UCLA
Victoria Reyes, UC Riverside
Dina Omar - UC Berkeley alumni

C. Abby Bratton, UCSD
Aditya Mohan, UCSB
Alex E, UCSB
Oscar Valle UCR
Katie Von Wald, UCSB
Idalia Robles De León, UCSB
Karla Gomez-Pelayo, UCB and UCSB
Walker Hewitt, UCSD
Kristen Bryant (UCSB)
Claudia Rodriguez, UCLA Alumni
Rachel Fox, UCSD
Sarah Abusaa, UCD
Fabián Pavón
Dana Zofia Flicker
Gin To, UCSD
Bailey Sneed
Alexis Aceves Garcia
Nadia Rojas, UC Berkeley
Yasmeen Daifallah, UCSC
Citlally Solorzano, UC San Diego
Charmaine Chua
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Tea Meskal, UCI

Raed El Rafei, UC Davis

Xochitl Mendoza, UCLA

Kimberly Yu, UC Berkeley

Daniel Chai, UCLA

Praj Mohan, UCB

Suggested Reading:

- [A Love Letter to our People in Palestine](#)
- [Gender Studies Departments In Solidarity With Palestinian Feminist Collective](#)
- [Beirut Institute for Critical Analysis and Research](#)
- [Purple-Washing: Israel's Faux Feminism Through the Lens of Medical Apartheid – FEM Newsmagazine](#)
- [Robin D. G. Kelley: Letter from a West Bank Refugee Camp | US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel](#)
- [Open letter from Alice Walker to Alicia Keys | US Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel](#)
- [Harvard Student letter of support](#)
- [Statement of Solidarity from Amazon & Google workers](#)
- [\(PDF\) Class Suicide: The Black Radical Tradition, Radical Scholarship, and the Neoliberal Turn | Steven Osuna - Academia.edu](#)

Statements in Support of Palestine across UC

- [Asian American Studies Department's Statement of Solidarity with Palestine](#)

History of UC and Israeli partnerships

- <https://www.georgiageorgia.org/land-back-fuck-cops>
- [The University of California and Israel's Innovation Authority sign cooperation agreement](#)
- [Statement on academic boycott of Israel | University of California](#)
- [U.S. - Israel Center Established at UC San Diego's Rady School of Management](#)
- <https://news.uci.edu/2021/02/10/campus-statement-asuci-feb9-resolution/> - UCI opposition to BDS Resolution passed by ASUCI
- [University of California statement on Mideast violence](#)