

CRITICAL RACE & ETHNIC STUDIES

CRES Statement of Solidarity with the Palestinian People on Nakba Day

May 15, 2021

As a program committed to the study of colonialism, military occupation, and Indigenous resistance, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies stands in support of the Palestinian people as they live under multiple forms of violence imposed on them by Israel. As an academic program housed on Turtle Island, we oppose settler colonialism everywhere and we condemn the land expropriation and settler colonial violence Palestinians have experienced for more than seven decades; we also note that this violence is facilitated by unwavering U.S. financial, military, and political support, which we vehemently oppose.

As we write, the Israeli military is bombarding Gaza, densely populated and under siege for now almost fifteen years. So far, during this shelling, over 145 Palestinians, including 41 children, have been murdered in Gaza and hundreds have been wounded, and Israeli forces have murdered 13 Palestinians in the West Bank. Ethnic cleansing continues apace across Palestine, including but not limited to the displacement of Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah. In the cities of Haifa, Lydd, Akka, and Yaffa, Palestinians are under constant threat by armed Israeli mobs looking for Arabs to attack.

As ethnic studies scholars and activists committed to anti-colonial, anti-racist, feminist, and queer organizing, situated particularly in California, we see the terrain of violence against Palestinians and censorship against Palestinians in the diaspora clearly. We see and condemn the censorship of Palestinian scholars, Palestinian studies, and Arab American Studies in our classrooms and in the U.S. academy more broadly. For this reason, we reject the language of clashes, conflict, and "both sides." As we oppose policing and prisons, Indigenous dispossession, and racialized violence, from Turtle Island to Palestine, we refuse to use objective language that would render us silent as Palestinians continue to experience an ongoing Nakba.

We stand with the protesters across Palestine, and around the world, in solidarity with Palestinian freedom struggles in the face of ceaseless violence. We urge other departments and programs to join us in issuing statements, alongside other forms of collective action, including worldwide protests today, Nakba Day, May 15th, to condemn ongoing Israeli state violence and express solidarity with the Palestinian people.

As ethnic studies scholars endorsing Scholars for Palestinian Freedom's "Palestine and Praxis: Open Letter and Call to Action," we affirm that "scholarship without action normalizes the status quo and reinforces Israel's impunity." And, as ethnic studies scholars in solidarity with the Palestinian Feminist Collective, we end with their affirmation of life and love in their "Love Letter to our People Struggling in Palestine:" "Your labor has taught us for generations: Palestine is a feminist issue. Love guides our methodology for liberation. We affirm life and implore feminists everywhere to speak up, organize, and join the struggle for Palestinian liberation. We call for an immediate halting of the theft of homes in Sheikh Jarrah, Silwan, and beyond, and an immediate halting to the airstrikes on Gaza."

In solidarity, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies Program
