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## Claremont Consortium Faculty Statement on Gaza

October 31, 2023

As faculty at the Claremont Colleges, we continue to watch with concern the escalation of violence in Palestine and Israel; to mourn, without reservation, all loss of human life in Gaza, in Israel, and across the occupied Palestinian territory; and to lament the suffering of civilians throughout the region, whose targeting is prohibited by international law.

At this time, we are especially concerned for the welfare of residents of Gaza, who have already suffered for nearly two decades under Israel's blockade that has trapped over 2 million Palestinians in an enclosed, densely populated area. In retaliation for the  [Hamas attack on civilians and military targets](#)  on October 7, Israel has tightened that blockade, depriving Palestinian civilians of water, electricity, and food. "We are putting a complete siege on Gaza," Israeli Defense Minister Yoav  [Gallant stated on October 9](#) . "No electricity, no food, no water, no fuel. Everything is closed. We are fighting human animals, and we will act accordingly." This dehumanizing language is characteristic of ethnic cleansing and  [genocide](#) . Recently circulated Israeli  [think tank](#)  and  [intelligence ministry documents](#)  lay out plans for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza in preparation for Israeli settlement.

The Israeli bombardment since October 7 has, as of October 30, killed over  [8300](#)  Palestinians in Gaza including entire families and children, and has destroyed or damaged Palestinian  [homes, schools, universities, mosques, churches, and hospitals](#) . This onslaught has  [displaced over](#)  one million Gazan residents, who have no safe place to take refuge. Israel has  [bombed the Rafah crossing](#) , the sole land-entrypoint into Gaza not controlled by Israel, disrupting the flow of aid to besieged Palestinians, even as the US is supplying  [additional military hardware to Israel](#) . This most recent siege and bombardment is the fourth such campaign in 15 years, attacks that have killed thousands of Palestinians, perpetrated by one of the world's most powerful and nuclear-armed militaries against a vulnerable civilian population, the majority of whom are  [refugees](#)  from successive waves of displacement by Israeli settlement and ethnic cleansing  [since 1948](#) .

This is a new and alarming phase in the long record of violence, displacement, and colonial domination of Palestine. As UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories  [Francesca Albanese](#)  has stated, the current situation is the result of "decades of oppression imposed on the Palestinians, brutalization, structural violence of course punctuated also by eruptive violence." The roots of this new phase lie in a well-documented 75+ year  [history](#)  of

Israeli settler-colonialism, military occupation and apartheid.

Although it may have been exacerbated by the rise to power of the most extreme right-wing coalition in Israel's history, the ongoing violence and terror inflicted by the Israeli state must be understood in the context of this settler-colonialism and Israel's apartheid regime, which has been documented in exhaustive detail by the world's most respected human rights organizations, [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#), as well as by the [United Nations](#) and by one of Israel's most established human rights organizations, [B'Tselem](#). The past year alone has seen repeated incursions by Israeli military into towns and villages on the West Bank and attacks by extremist settler gunmen, who have burned Palestinian homes, murdered Palestinians, destroyed their crops, and terrorized families into leaving their homes and farms. However, the dispossession, displacement, and repression of Palestinians across historic Palestine has been the policy of every Israeli government since 1948. Israel-based legal rights organization, [Adalah](#), documents over 65 laws that discriminate against Palestinians within Israel. The military occupation of the West Bank has led to [two distinct legal regimes](#) that systematically privilege the rights of Israeli settlers [in illegal settlements](#) while denying the most basic rights of housing, freedom of movement, and security to Palestinians. In occupied East Jerusalem, Palestinians are [daily evicted from their homes](#) to make room for settlers and are under constant threat of losing residency rights. Palestinians are subject to arbitrary arrest and indefinite detention without charges: two in every five Palestinian men have been arrested, and among the thousands of Palestinians in Israeli prisons are at least [170 children](#), many of whom have been subjected to [intense interrogation](#) and even torture.

These conditions, as enumerated by multiple human rights organizations, [violate international law on multiple counts](#). As the *New York Times* reported on October 10, "[Israeli airstrikes](#) flattened mosques over the heads of worshippers. At least two hospitals, and two centers run by the Palestine Red Crescent, have been hit. So have two schools run by the U.N. agency that helps Palestinian refugees." This is in line with Israel's pattern of targeting [civilians](#), [hospitals](#), [schools](#), [places of worship](#), and [entire neighborhoods](#) over decades. Without an acknowledgment of this context, condemnations only of specific acts of violence perpetrated by Palestinian armed groups can serve to disavow the roots of violence under a seemingly neutral mask of humanitarian concern. This is particularly the case for successive US administrations and their Congressional backers who have for decades provided material support and political cover to Israel's apartheid regime and are therefore complicit in its every individual act of violence and in the total system of injustice that US aid enables. In fact, "The United States has given Israel more than [\\$260 billion in combined military and economic aid](#) since World War II." Alarming, the US is currently bolstering its military presence in the region. Given this backdrop of one-sided US aid, we urge US citizens who wish to condemn any instance of violence in Israel/Palestine to recognize US complicity in Israel's apartheid regime and its expansionist project of dispossession and ethnic cleansing. Without that commitment, the repudiation of one form of violence and endorsement of another is hypocritical.

If we repudiate violence, we are then bound to engage in an active practice of non-violent activism and organizing to transform the conditions that sustain and reproduce militarism and violence. In the case of Palestine, that action has been clear and effective. Palestinian civil society has unanimously called for a campaign to impose [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions](#) (BDS) on Israel until it 1) ends its siege of Gaza and its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantles the Wall; 2) recognizes the fundamental rights of Palestinians in Israel to full equality; and 3) implements the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties [as stipulated in UN Resolution 194](#). In the US, that campaign has already had a major effect in transforming public opinion. But only a redoubling of BDS efforts in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation from settler colonial domination can make the complicity of the US state politically unacceptable. Along with student groups already working on the cause of justice for Palestinians, we urge all those concerned at the Claremont Colleges and beyond to further the emancipation of Palestinians from apartheid and colonial domination to redouble efforts to promote BDS on campus and in professional associations and civil society organizations everywhere.

We further share our outrage that Zionist advocacy organizations have subjected and continue to subject [Palestinian](#), Arab, and Muslim students and faculty, students of all backgrounds who advocate for Palestinian rights, and faculty of all backgrounds who teach on Palestine and Israel to bullying, [harassment](#), and [suppression](#) of their right to free speech. The Center for Constitutional Rights and Palestine Legal have termed this suppression “[the Palestine exception](#),” where all forms of public advocacy, self-representation, and freedom of speech are permitted except in the case of Palestine. In addition to violating constitutional free speech rights, such closures on critical social thought and public discourse violate academic freedom, are antithetical to the missions of our Colleges, disrupt our capacity to fulfill our professional, scholarly, and pedagogical responsibilities, and stifle our students’ efforts to engage in public political action. We reject all forms of discrimination, including Islamophobia, [anti-Muslim racism](#), anti-Arab racism, and [anti-Semitism](#) -- [which should not be conflated with critiques of Israel or Zionism](#). As reaffirmed in a recent [statement](#) by the Claremont Colleges AAUP Chapter Executive Committee, we therefore insist that each of the Claremont Colleges uphold academic freedom and the right to freedom of speech for all community members.

We stand in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and with [our colleagues](#) in occupied Palestine. We invite our colleagues and students to learn about Palestinian history and to recognize their full humanity. We ask our administrations to reaffirm their commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression without threat of censure or retaliation. We call upon our colleagues in Claremont to join us in this solidarity, by [contacting](#) Congressional representatives to demand a ceasefire, supporting BDS efforts, and upholding academic freedom and free speech protections for all community members. For additional actions you can take, see the websites of the [U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#) and [Jewish Voice for Peace](#).

Claremont Consortium faculty who want to sign this statement should email [claremontfjp@gmail.com](mailto:claremontfjp@gmail.com). Pre-tenure, contingent, and visiting faculty as well as faculty whose administrative positions preclude them from signing such statements may sign anonymously by emailing that address.

**Claremont Consortium Faculty Signatures**

Andrea Acosta, Pitzer College  
Andrew Aisenberg, Scripps College  
Anna Ahn, Harvey Mudd College  
Fazia Aitel, Claremont McKenna College  
Rita Cano Alcalá, Scripps College  
Amsale Alemu, Scripps College  
Ahmed Alwishah, Pitzer College  
Shaila Andrabi, Pomona College  
Bill Anthes, Pitzer College  
Brent Armendinger, Pitzer College  
Claudia Arteaga, Scripps College  
Guadalupe Bacio, Pomona College  
Gabriela Bacsan, Scripps College  
Aimee Bahng, Pomona College  
Mita Banerjee, Pitzer College  
Lucas Bang, Harvey Mudd College  
Sumangala Bhattacharya, Pitzer College  
Ralph Bolton, Professor Emeritus, Pomona College  
Nigel Boyle, Pitzer College  
Suchi Branfman, Scripps College  
Michael Brown, Keck Science  
Kim Bruce, Professor Emeritus, Pomona College  
Jose Zapata Calderon, Professor Emeritus, Pitzer College  
Lucia Cantero, Claremont Graduate University  
Deborah Carter, Claremont Graduate University  
Alfonso Castro, Harvey Mudd College  
Piya Chatterjee, Scripps College  
Alessia Cecchet, Pitzer College  
Tamara Cedré, Pitzer College  
Jih-Fei Cheng, Scripps College  
Wendy Cheng, Scripps College  
Angelina Chin, Pomona College  
Pey-Yi Chu, Pomona College  
Ambereen Dadabhoy, Harvey Mudd College  
Adam Davis, Scripps College  
Lara Deeb, Scripps College  
Deshonay Dozier, Claremont Graduate University  
Kim Drake, Scripps College  
Erika Dyson, Harvey Mudd College  
Shawki El-Zatmah, Claremont McKenna

Ann Esin, Harvey Mudd College  
Kouross Esmaeli, Pomona College  
Halford H. Fairchild, Professor Emeritus, Pitzer College  
Paul Faulstich, Professor Emeritus, Pitzer College  
Jennifer Feitosa, Claremont McKenna College  
Heather Ferguson, Claremont McKenna College  
Elise Ferree, Scripps and Pitzer Colleges  
Cindy Forster, Scripps College  
Carmen Fought, Pitzer College  
Bassam Frangieh, Claremont McKenna College  
Anup Gampa, Harvey Mudd College  
Lily Geismer, Claremont McKenna College  
Sarah Gilbert, Pitzer College  
Mar Golub, Scripps College  
Ken Gonzales-Day, Scripps College  
Martha Gonzalez, Scripps College  
George Gorse, Pomona College  
Sharon Goto, Pomona College  
Paula Gutiérrez, Pitzer College  
Romeo Guzmán, Claremont Graduate University  
Anne Harley, Scripps College  
Laura Harris, Pitzer College  
Dre Helms, Harvey Mudd College  
Esther Hernández-Medina, Pomona College  
Todd Honma, Pitzer College  
Gabriel Hope, Harvey Mudd College  
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Eric A. Hurley, Pomona College  
Wei-Chin Hwang, Claremont McKenna College  
Phyllis J. Jackson, Pomona College  
Barbara Junisbai, Pitzer College  
Jananie Kalyanaraman, Scripps College  
Ann Kaneko, Scripps College  
Hazel Katz (Scripps College)  
Sarah Kavassalis, Harvey Mudd College  
Thomas Kim, Scripps College  
Jordan Kirk, Pomona College  
Arash Khazeni, Pomona College  
Juliet Koss, Scripps College  
Sarp Kurgan, Pitzer, College  
Amanda Lagji, Pitzer College  
Gina Lamb, Pitzer College  
Sidney J. Lemelle, Professor Emeritus, Pomona College  
Jesse Lerner, Pitzer College  
Richard Lewis, Pomona College  
Alexandra Lippman, Pomona College

Julia E. Liss, Professor Emerita, Scripps College  
Jemma Lorenat, Pitzer College  
Joyce Lu, Pomona College  
David Luis-Brown, Claremont Graduate University  
Theresa Lynn, Harvey Mudd College  
Leila Mansouri, Scripps College  
Daniel E. Martinez, Pomona College  
Rachel Mayeri, Harvey Mudd College  
Wendy Menefee-Libey, Harvey Mudd College  
Jessie Mills, Pomona College  
Gabriela Morales, Scripps College  
Jim Morrison, Claremont McKenna College  
M. Bilal Nasir, Pomona College  
Nancy Neiman, Scripps College  
Joanne Nucho, Pomona College  
Gilda Ochoa, Pomona College  
Eve Oishi, Claremont Graduate University  
Dan O'Leary, Pomona College  
Harmony O'Rourke, Pitzer College  
Sumita Pahwa, Scripps College  
Seo Young Park, Scripps College  
Joe Parker, Professor Emeritus, Pitzer College  
Marina Perez de Mendiola, Scripps College  
Susan A. Phillips, Pitzer College  
Suyapa Portillo, Pitzer College  
Muriel Poston, Professor Emerita, Pitzer College  
Carolyn Ratteray, Pomona College  
Hans J. Rindisbacher, Pomona College  
Ethan Ritz, Harvey Mudd College  
Rita Roberts, Professor Emerita, Scripps College  
Colin Robins, Claremont McKenna, Pitzer, and Scripps Colleges  
David Kawalko Roselli, Scripps College  
Erin Runions, Pomona College  
Tomás F. Summers Sandoval Jr., Pomona College  
Carmen Sanjuan-Pastor, Scripps College  
Sarah Sarzynski, Claremont McKenna College  
Xanda Schofield, Harvey Mudd College  
David Seitz, Harvey Mudd College  
Dan Segal, Professor Emeritus, Pitzer College  
Shahriar Shahriari, Pomona College  
Marie-Denise Shelton, Claremont McKenna College  
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Darryl A. Smith, Pomona College  
Maryan Soliman, Scripps College  
Tessa Solomon-Lane, Scripps and Pitzer Colleges

Claudia Strauss, Pitzer College  
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Trang Tran, Scripps College  
Vanessa Tyson, Scripps College  
Norman Valencia, Claremont McKenna College  
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Kevin Williamson, Scripps College  
Carlin Wing, Scripps College  
Calden Wloka, Harvey Mudd College  
Ken Wolf, Pomona College  
Xin Xin, Scripps College  
Samuel Yamashita, Pomona College  
Kathy Yep, Pitzer College

Department Endorsements:

Intercollegiate Department of Africana Studies  
Intercollegiate Department of Asian American Studies  
Intercollegiate Department of Chicano/a Latino/a Studies at the Claremont Colleges  
Scripps College Department of Spanish, Latin American, and Caribbean Literatures and Cultures

In addition to the 150 individual signatures and 4 Departmental endorsements, 37 faculty members have signed anonymously. Anonymous signatures include pre-tenure, contingent, and visiting faculty as well as faculty whose administrative positions preclude them from signing such statements.