FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 14, 2024

Media Contact:
Alex McDonough, New Mexico Jews for a Free Palestine
505-204-4488, nmjfreepalestine@gmail.com

William Whiteman, Santa Fe Democratic Socialist of America
505-699-5259, willmwhiteman@gmail.com

Samia van Hattum, Santa Feans for Justice in Palestine
505-699-8707, samiavh@yahoo.com

MATISYAHU SANTA FE CONCERT CANCELED THANKS TO PRESSURE FROM LOCAL UNION AND PRO PALESTINIAN ACTIVISTS

Santa Fe, NM (February, 2024) - Musician Matisyahu's concert at Meow Wolf was canceled at the last minute on Wednesday, February 14th, following advocacy efforts from the venue's local union and pro-Palestinian activists. Local activists, advocates, and community members inundated Meow Wolf with calls and social media posts throughout the day preceding the event until the Meow Wolf phone line was disconnected. In addition to local pro-Palestinian activists, Meow Wolf Workers Collective members and leadership also advocated for the show to be canceled. The Meow Wolf Workers Collective called for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine in December of 2023.

Matisyahu, born in Pennsylvania as Matthew Miller, has been an outspoken supporter of the genocidal campaign against Palestinians in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Through his social media channels, the musician has issued statements such as "I would like Israel to destroy those people." Activists took issue with statements expressing such genocidal intent, in addition to Matisyahu's Islamophobic and transphobic statements such as, "Your pronouns will not prevent Jihadists from breaking into your home."

Local pro Palestine activists criticized Meow Wolf, which in June 2020 stated on their website, “we recognize our complicity in systems of oppression, racism, and white supremacy, and admit our past silence was complicity.” Samia van Hattum, a local member of Santa Feans for Justice in Palestine connected the local victory with the national Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement stating, “This victory in canceling the performance of an artist who is pro-apartheid and pro genocide is part of the ongoing academic and cultural boycott movement. It is unconscionable that an arts organization that purports to have an equity lens, such as Meow Wolf, would host an artist like this. We are happy to see this event has been canceled and it speaks to the power of the BDS movement.”

Local activist, John Isaac Gutierrez, from Santa Fe Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, critiqued Matisyahu, who describes himself as a reggae artist, as performing “appropriative reggae wrapped in the flag of a violent apartheid state.” The activism was also led by local Jewish organizers such as Alex McDonough from New Mexico Jews for a Free Palestine, who said, “Today many thoughtful, caring individuals came together from different backgrounds to say we won’t give hate a platform in our community.” The action was organized by Santa Fe Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, Northern New Mexico Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), New Mexico Jews for a Free Palestine (NMJFP), Santa Fe Democratic Socialists of America, and Santa Feans for Justice in Palestine (SFJP).

This victory for local pro Palestine activist comes three weeks after the International Court of Justice found that it is “plausible” that Israel is committing acts in violation of the genocide convention. Israel’s brutal campaign of violence that has left over 100,000 Palestinians dead, wounded, or missing under the rubble. Over 28,000 civilians in Gaza have been killed, 70% of whom are children and women. The United Nations has stated that 2.2 million Palestinians in Gaza are at “imminent risk of famine.”

New Mexico Jews for a Free Palestine (NMJFP) is a coalition of anti-Zionist Jewish people dedicated to the end of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and to freedom and the right of return for Palestinian people.

Santa Feans for Justice in Palestine advocates for equal human and democratic rights for all Palestinians, and in particular for an end to US military, economic, and diplomatic support for the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, for maintaining the siege of Gaza including periodic bombings, and for Israeli apartheid policies and actions which subjugate, displace, control, kill, imprison and humiliate Palestinians.

Northern New Mexico Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) is a local chapter of SURJ, a national organization that brings hundreds of thousands of white people into fights for racial and

economic justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, NNMSURJ moves white people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability.

Santa Fe Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine is a Palestinian solidarity organization working for liberation, permanent ceasefire and ending illegal occupation, apartheid and humanitarian crimes in occupied Palestine.