











In Response to Academic Repression Regarding Palestine at CUNY

[To add your name, please click here or email us at cuny4palestine@gmail.com]

In coalition between all CUNY Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) groups and CUNY for Palestine, we stand in solidarity with the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) Social Justice & Equity Centers (SJEC) who have faced censorship and a series of online attacks after uplifting the Palestinian struggle through an educational event series. We commend their steadfastness in the face of the slanderous campaign against their work. A university for the people is one that defends its students and workers when they stand up against oppression in the face of reactionary demands that whitewash imperialist brutality.

On March 16, a post on Twitter attacked BMCC's SJEC's display titled "Visual Timeline of Occupied Palestinian Land'," which was intended to educate the BMCC community on the expropriation and theft of Palestinian land, the ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people, and the history of Zionist settler colonial rule in Palestine. However, and in line with Zionist tactics we've seen repeatedly used across CUNY, SJEC was falsely accused of antisemitism by multiple Zionist media outlets outside of CUNY to pressure BMCC into canceling the event series, which included taking down the visual display of the expropriation of Palestinian land over time.

BMCC's response to this malicious and completely baseless campaign, was to tell the SJEC to remove the posters without first informing the project coordinator. Since then, several BMCC faculty members have made complaints about SJEC's educational events around Palestine (including a screening of film 'Farha' and a discussion with a Palestinian student activist) and a virulent media campaign, both in the press and in online spaces, has not only revolved around smearing the event, but focused on denying the ongoing genocide of Palestinians overall.

This is a microcosm of how antisemitism has become weaponized as a political tool resulting in the dilution of its meaning and the destabilization of the ability to combat and identify actual antisemitism, such as the rising Christo-fascist movement in the United States, to not only attack and censor Palestine solidarity organizing, but omit any mention of Palestine at all in our academic spaces. The Zionist redefinition of antisemitism, with the most prominent example being "IHRA", exists to extend the settler colonial state's reach outside of its illegal borders to silence Palestinians in exile.

Of the claims made by Zionists, two of them were to deny the assassination of Shireen Abu Akleh and of any ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people. 'Farha', the film SJEC scheduled to

present, is a historical drama of the Nakba which was the ethnic cleansing, sexual assault, and mass murder, of 750,000+ Palestinians in 1948 enacted by Zionist militias whose members then merged into the current settler army: the “israeli defensive forces”. The educational event series, specifically the visual timeline and movie, has now been shut down, thus denying BMCC community members the opportunity to partake in learning while allowing racist propaganda perpetuated by Zionists to continue.

Instead of defending the right of their students and workers to critically engage with the ongoing occupation of Palestine, BMCC allowed revisionist anti-Palestinian propagandists to influence our educational spaces and sent out an email apologizing for the series to the broader BMCC community. Zionist groups on and off campus are now calling to host their own series of events on Zionism as part of an intimidation tactic. Meanwhile, they continue to harass SJEC team members online and via voicemail.

This shameless cowing to Zionist intimidation further exemplifies how our CUNY institutions are not separate from the Indigenous struggles of the world, but actively play a part in whitewashing academia and perpetuating violent imperialist narratives. The silencing/omission of Indigenous peoples is not a unique phenomenon in Zionist rhetoric, as Zionism is based in European settler colonial ideology as even stated by Herzl himself, and is the inevitable outcome of such an ideology. Erasure is present in various Indigenous struggles such as the struggles of the Kānaka Maoli, the Sámi, the Indigenous peoples of North America, and the Taíno people. It is a common practice amongst many settler colonies, such as the United States, which is also deeply invested in supporting the persecution of the Indigenous Palestinian people.

We reaffirm our solidarity with the hardworking members of the SJEC with action, not just lip service. This is academic censorship, and it is in flagrant violation of CUNY’s Henderson rules (#5). In defiance of this blatant attack on academic freedom via Zionist repression, we collectively launch our week-long campaign titled Palestine Education Week in coordination with student-led Palestine solidarity groups around CUNY. We refuse and denounce the imperialist and white supremacist use of “neutrality” and “both-sidesism” as academic doublespeak designed to delegitimize rightful rage at the ongoing genocide in occupied Palestine. “Neutrality” at CUNY means an administration that tolerates and is actively involved in subjugating its own marginalized community members while maintaining financial ties to weapons manufacturers and other oppressive systems and institutions. We call upon the CUNY community to stand up and join us in our campaign against not only Zionist repression, but the repression of ALL Indigenous and anti-imperialist struggles of the Global South.

We therefore demand..

1. A public apology and accountability statement written by the BMCC admin who failed to protect their workers.
2. Allow the timeline and movie event to be implemented exactly as it was intended to be by its creators.

3. To build networks of communication between Palestinian students and workers within the BMCC community to better represent them.

[To add your name, please click here or email us at cuny4palestine@gmail.com]

CUNY SIGNATORIES

1. Corinna Mullin, Faculty, John Jay College
2. Mariel Acosta, Student, Graduate Center
3. Christopher Santiago, Faculty, College of Staten Island
4. Jean Halley, Student/Faculty/Alumni, College of Staten Island/Graduate Center/Hunter College
5. Ozlem Goner, Faculty, College of Staten Island
6. Melody Garcia, Student, Hunter College
7. Ujju Aggarwal, Alumni, Graduate Center
8. Nadia Saleh, Student/Staff/Alumni, Borough of Manhattan Community College/Hunter College
9. Saifa Khan, Student, Baruch College
10. Sehrish Taqweem, Student/Staff, Queens College
11. Salma, Student, Brooklyn College
12. Jahan Ahmad, Student, Hunter College
13. Catreen, Student, Hunter College
14. Dariella Rodriguez, Alumni, Bronx Community College, Lehman College
15. Anwar Alshohatee, Student/Alumni, Hunter College/Borough of Manhattan Community College
16. Yerlin Alba, Student, Hunter College
17. Alyssa Sukana, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
18. Nancy Oshy, Student, City College of New York
19. Laith Shalabi, Student, CUNY School of Law
20. Sami, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
21. Joan Lora, Student, LaGuardia Community College/Lehman College
22. Sadia, Alumni, Baruch College/Borough of Manhattan Community College
23. Sadia Alam, Student, City College of New York
24. Ibrahim Hussein, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
25. Alan Cata, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
26. AwdAllah Abdelhay, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
27. Michelene Billy, Staff, Borough of Manhattan Community College
28. Asmaa, Student, Brooklyn College
29. Shaharyar Bhatti, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
30. Nabila Ibnath, Alumni, Hunter College
31. Pedro Cruz, Alumni, Hunter College
32. Erik Wallenberg, Student, Graduate Center
33. Nancy Stern, Faculty/Alumni, City College of New York
34. Sumaita Hasan, Alumni, Hunter College
35. Jason Cohen, Student, City College of New York

36. Yaqoob Khan, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
37. Alissa Mesibov, Alumni, Brooklyn College
38. Caroline Schwab, Student, City College of New York
39. Donald Monaco, Faculty, LaGuardia Community College
40. Linta Varghese, Faculty, Borough of Manhattan Community College
41. Jeannette Graulau, Faculty, Lehman College
42. Olivia Mignone, Student, Graduate Center
43. Molly Daniels, Alumni, Hunter College
44. Giacomo Bianchino, Student/Faculty, Graduate Center
45. Charles Post, Professor, Borough of Manhattan Community College/Graduate Center
46. Stuart Chen-Hayes, Faculty, Lehman College
47. Keith Miyake, Alumni, Graduate Center
48. Renate Bridenthal, Retired Faculty, Brooklyn College
49. Faye Bloom, Alumni, John Jay College
50. Miriam Edwin, Alumni, Graduate Center
51. Michael Kramer, Alumni, City College of New York
52. Jan Valle, Faculty, City College of New York
53. Lily Padia, Alumni, City College of New York
54. Katharine Beer, Alumni, Hunter College
55. Ana Hanesworth, Student, Hunter College
56. Britt Munro, Student/Adjunct Instructor, Graduate Center/Lehman College
57. Jane Guskin, Faculty, Queens College
58. Tenzin, Student, Hunter College
59. Addy Malinowski, Student, Graduate Center
60. Andrew Shapiro, Student/Faculty, Graduate Center/Hunter College
61. Debbie Hamilton, Faculty, Lehman College
62. Maesha, Alumni, Hunter College
63. Riccardo Brindisi, Student, CUNY School of Law
64. Rose M. Kim, Faculty, Borough of Manhattan Community College
65. Nihaya Qawasmi, Alumni, Brooklyn College/Hunter College
66. Suzanne Adely, Alumni, CUNY School of Law
67. Nicholas Davydoff, Student, Brooklyn College
68. Halimatou Jabbie, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
69. Halimatou Jabbie, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
70. Sukie, Student, Graduate Center
71. Hossannah Asuncion, Faculty, Borough of Manhattan Community College
72. Janelle Poe, Student/Staff, Borough of Manhattan Community College/City College of New York/Graduate Center
73. Rawan Saleh, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
74. Tyler Graham, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
75. Roaa Shalabi, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
76. Aishah Tunkara, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
77. Hamzah Moore, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
78. Zara Qurashi, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College

79. Richard Merino, Student, City College of New York
80. Ju Ly Ban, Student, Graduate Center
81. Zarir, Student, Borough of Manhattan Community College
82. Marcus Hyde, Student, CUNY School of Law
83. Shellyne Rodriguez, Faculty, Hunter College
84. Tami Kashia Gold, Faculty, Hunter College
85. Nathan Nikolic, Student/Faculty, Baruch College/Graduate Center/Hunter College
86. Angela Dunne, Student/Graduate Worker, Graduate Center/Hostos Community College
87. Angeles Donoso Macaya, Faculty, Borough of Manhattan Community College/Graduate Center
88. Fleur Behrendt, Student, Graduate Center
89. Allyson Ganster, Student, Graduate Center
90. Ryan Schiavone, Faculty, Kingsborough Community College
91. Alice Kallman, Student, Queens College
92. Hester Eisenstein, Emerita, Graduate Center/Queens College
93. Muhammed Ali Khalidi, Faculty, Graduate Center
94. Elsa Raker, Student, CUNY School of Law
95. Jessica Rice-Evans, Student/Staff, Graduate Center/CUNY School of Professional Studies
96. Fernando Lim, Student, CUNY School of Law
97. Jennifer Queenan, Student/Staff, Graduate Center
98. Mitchell Kaye, Alumni, CUNY School of Law
99. Thayer Hastings, Student, Graduate Center
100. Marianne Madoré, Student, Graduate Center

CUNY ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

1. Dominican Studies Group
2. Multi-cultural Center at Social Justice & Equity Centers at Borough of Manhattan Community College
3. United Front Committee for a Labor Party
4. Muslim Students Association at Borough of Manhattan Community College
5. Not In Our Name, Jewish Antizionist Collective at CUNY

NON-CUNY SIGNATORIES

1. Kiran Afridi
2. Maryam Shuaib
3. Rose Ottallah
4. Sherry Ahmed
5. Sahar Akhtar
6. Disha
7. Varshi
8. Halyn Xheraj
9. Mir Mohammed Ali Mubashir
10. Jenin Difallah

11. Sireyah Mesbeh
12. Ibrahim Usmani
13. Elias Abdulla
14. Majed
15. Muhammed Sahibzada
16. Kahlil
17. Mariam
18. Ramisa Chowdhury
19. Tiana Reid
20. Matías Gallegos Ruiz
21. Adnan Bibi
22. Benjamin Mordecai Ben-Baruch
23. Amber Dennis
24. Baba Aye
25. Ellen Isaacs
26. Michael Letwin
27. John McGeehan
28. Mae Zeitouni
29. Layla
30. Majid Al-Jadaa
31. Naba Sheikh
32. Al Hirani
33. Max Ajl
34. Matteo Capasso
35. Sadaqat Ali
36. Zahur Malik
37. Anisa Hosseinezhad
38. Mohammad Khalid
39. Usuf Chikte
40. Abdul Mumin Abdul Rahman
41. Sameeha R
42. Bashir Alfadda
43. Abdulhaq Ibrahim
44. Andrianna Polito
45. Merry Maisel
46. Sameeha R
47. Andrianna Polito
48. Deborah Condon
49. Susan Smith
50. Luke
51. Alexandra Raskin
52. Connie Sosnoff
53. Gina Pilica
54. Meera Jaffrey

55. Noha Zakaria
56. Lisa Sanetra
57. Stuart Freeman
58. Laura Weinthal
59. Anne Bowers
60. Sonja Danon
61. Leon Pulsinelle
62. Samira Farwaneh

NON-CUNY ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

1. Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
2. Palestinian Youth Movement NYC Chapter
3. Within Our Lifetime
4. Muslim Students Association at St. Francis College
5. Al-Awda New York Chapter
6. Vita Books
7. Socialist Workers League
8. Veterans For Peace/Chapter 021 Northern NJ
9. Bergen County Green Party
10. Jews for Palestinian Right of Return
11. People Against Apartheid and Facism (PAAF)
12. Occupy Bergen County
13. Ghana Muslim Students Association
14. Jewish Voice for Peace, San Diego Chapter
15. May Day Student Organization
16. Muslim Peace Fellowship
17. Palestinian Solidarity Committee at UT Austin
18. Bronx Anti-War Coalition
19. United American Indians of New England
20. Jewish Voice for Peace, Atlanta Chapter
21. Jewish Voice for Peace, North Jersey Chapter
22. Fire in Saratoga
23. Palestine Legal
24. National Lawyers Guild, Michigan Law Chapter
25. Palestine Empowerment Foundation (UMMS)