



**Motion title:** Until Palestine is free, none of us are!

**Proposer:** Ali Sabba – *Non-Portfolio Officer*

**Secunder:** Ameer Al-Magidi – *President of Arab Society*

**Summary:**

This motion affirms solidarity with Palestinian liberation and supports the struggle against occupation. To achieve this, the Students' Union must challenge and oppose systems of oppression against Palestine and campaign to support Palestinian freedom, including support of the BDS movement (as dictated by existing Union Policy), holding Universities and Government accountable and promoting freedom of speech whilst ensuring the welfare of students from all backgrounds.

**Council Notes:**

1. This motion is written with collective compassion for the loss of innocent Palestinian and Israeli lives, as well as those in surrounding areas. There is huge collective grief, and our deepest condolences go out to anyone who has lost loved ones.
2. The Israel-Palestine conflict is one of the longest ongoing conflicts in the world and has recently intensified over the last few months. Thousands of Palestinians have been killed by Israeli security forces historically and in recent years, including 'Operation Cast Lead' 2008-09 and 'Operation Protective Edge', 2014. 200 Palestinian people were killed this year prior to events on 7th October, and the number of Palestinians killed in Israeli bombardment surpasses 20,000 since then.
3. 120 countries, constituting more than two-thirds of the United Nations General Assembly, have called for a humanitarian truce in Gaza and the United Kingdom declined to do so. (1)
4. Reports that the Israeli government is committing crimes against humanity in Gaza, including collective punishment, ethnic cleansing, and unfolding genocide. This includes multiple UN special rapporteurs, Palestinian human rights organisations, Jewish civil society groups, and hundreds of Holocaust and genocide studies scholars. The International Criminal Court has been formally asked to investigate the unfolding genocide in Gaza.  
(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)
5. Israel operates as an apartheid state, as affirmed by nine UN special rapporteurs, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Israeli human rights organisations, including Yesh Din and B'Tselem, and Palestinian human rights organisations, including Al-Haq and Addameer. This has been reaffirmed by the Anglican Church of South Africa and the South African government, who have cited their own bitter experience of apartheid as expertise.  
(7)(8)(9)(10)(11)(12) (13)
6. Israel is supported by western governments including the UK and the US who offer military, economic and political support. Since the Conservative government was elected in May 2015, the UK has licenced over £472m worth of arms to Israeli forces. In 2022, the US committed \$3.3 billion in foreign assistance to Israel with 99.7% going to the Israeli military. (14)(15)(16)
7. The UK government has tabled an 'anti-boycott bill' that, if passed, could dramatically affect the ability to campaign for social and climate justice in the UK and around the world. (17)
8. Palestinian Trade Unions call to halt the arms trade to Israel and to end crimes against humanity including:

- a. The deliberate bombing of civilian homes, universities, schools and hospitals;
  - b. The blockade of water, food, medical supplies and fuel;
  - c. The proposal by Israel's Ministry of Intelligence for the forced expulsion of more than two million human beings into the Egyptian desert. (18)
9. A report by BRISMES and ELSC of The Adverse Impact of the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism, which conflates legitimate criticism of the state of Israel and its policies with anti-Jewish racism.  
(19)

**Council Believes:**

1. For the last 75 years Palestinians have faced Israeli settler colonial dispossession, ethnic cleansing, military occupation and apartheid, which has been supported by western imperialism and has led to the latest conflict.
2. Conflating the legitimate criticism of the Israeli government with anti-Jewish racism undermines the possibility of demonstrating solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against oppression and undermines freedom of speech and academic freedom.
3. None of our Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, or other student communities are responsible for the actions of the Israeli state or of Hamas and racial discrimination should be fought against and rejected.
4. That global boycotts are a non-violent, legitimate, and effective tactic that assisted in the successful struggle against apartheid in South Africa.
5. Universities and Students' Unions have a duty to promote freedom of speech and academic freedom, including expressions of support for Palestine.
6. UEASU should actively engage with and support campaigns and initiatives that align with the principles of the BDS movement, encouraging ethical consumer choices and divestment actions to hold those complicit in human rights violations accountable and promote justice and equality for the Palestinian people.

**Council Resolves:**

For the SU, in keeping with the SU charitable objectives and the parameters of the law, to:

1. declare its solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people against occupation and their aims of seeking their right to self-determination.
2. call for an immediate end to the genocidal violence in Gaza and to call on its members to support and campaign for Palestinian liberation and the aim for peace and justice for Palestine.
3. condemn the conflict being used to insight islamophobia or antisemitism and to support students who face discrimination.
4. encourage constructive dialogue and respectful discourse within the UEASU community regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, aiming for a deeper understanding of diverse perspectives and fostering an environment that promotes empathy, tolerance, and informed discussion.
5. collaborate with pro-Palestinian organisers in efforts to organize events, seminars, and workshops, supporting platforms for the Palestinian voices, and the creation of spaces for students to learn more about the Palestinian cause.

6. ensure that it provides a supportive environment that upholds democratic values, diversity of thought, and the right to express opinions freely, including advocating for justice and freedom for Palestine so its members may express their views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and related issues without fear of punishment or censorship, in accordance with the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression.
7. affirm that Student Union (SU) officers, have the right to express their personal views and opinions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without being compelled to remain neutral, recognizing that individuals can hold opinions while fulfilling their responsibilities, in alignment with the principles of freedom of expression and to condemn any attempts to suppress or penalize SU officers for expressing their views on Palestine, the Israeli occupation, or related matters within the parameters of the law.
8. recognise Palestinian Remembrance Day (Nakba Day) on May 15 each year, and the importance of educational events and activities that raise awareness about the Nakba and its ongoing impact.
9. affirm its commitments and renew legacy policies including Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), movement and Opposition to Prevent. (20)(21)
10. submit this motion to the National Union of Students and call on it to publicly support the Palestinian struggle and oppose British imperialism's role in the oppression of the Palestinian people
11. Call upon the VC and University to uphold the institutional principles of civic responsibility to our university and global community and oppose systems of oppression against Palestine and protect student and staff freedom of speech in light of state intervention. Including:
  - a. To reject threats by the UK government to revoke the immigration status of
  - b. foreign nationals who express support for Palestine and to protect students and staff from attacks on their freedom of speech.
  - c. to develop anti-racism policies that address the shared logic of dehumanisation that underlies all forms of racism.
  - d. engage with academic institutions in Palestine, fostering collaborations and partnerships that enhance academic exchanges, research, and educational opportunities for Palestinian and UEA students and faculty.
  - e. to reintroduce their University of Sanctuary scholarship and introduce a Humanitarian Scholarship as other institutions have, aligning with of the university's title as a university of sanctuary. (22)(23)(24)
  - f. to acknowledge that a critique of the state of Israel should not be conflated with anti-Jewish racism and so revoke the IHRA definition of antisemitism
  - g. to adopt BDS's economic boycott as laid out by BDS. (25)
  - h. to not bank with Barclays due to ethical concerns related to Barclays' alleged support or involvement in activities associated with Israeli settlements, potential human rights issues, and a desire to align banking practices with the university's ethical principles and the expectations of its stakeholders.
12. engage with local and national authorities, advocating for policies and actions that promote justice, human rights, and peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including urging the UK government to take a proactive role in facilitating a just and equitable resolution to the conflict.
13. Campaign for the right to boycott and resist the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill

14. To condemn the British government's unquestioning support for the Israeli state and the distortions of the mainstream media in Britain in its coverage of this conflict and support the call from Palestinian Trade Unions to halt the arms trade to Israel. (26)
15. To support efforts to hold political leaders accountable for aiding and abetting war crimes in Gaza. (27)

#### References:

1. [UN General Assembly adopts Gaza resolution calling for immediate and sustained 'humanitarian truce' | UN News](#)
2. [Gaza: UN experts decry bombing of hospitals and schools as crimes against humanity, call for prevention of genocide - Question of Palestine](#)
3. [Urgent Action: Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Call on Third States to Urgently Intervene to Protect the Palestinian People Against Genocide \(alhaq.org\)](#)
4. [URGENT: Stop genocide against Palestinians in Gaza \(call now\) - JVP \(jewishvoiceforpeace.org\)](#)
5. [Public Statement: Scholars Warn of Potential Genocide in Gaza – TWAILR](#)
6. [Dirco: Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians \(businesslive.co.za\)](#)
7. [Special Rapporteur Says Israel's Unlawful Carceral Practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory Are Tantamount to International Crimes and Have Turned it into an Open-Air Prison | OHCHR](#)
8. [A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution | HRW](#)
9. [MDE1551412022ENGLISH.pdf \(amnesty.org\)](#)
10. [The Occupation of the West Bank and the Crime of Apartheid: Legal Opinion - Yesh Din \(yesh-din.org\)](#)
11. [This is apartheid: The Israeli regime promotes and perpetuates Jewish supremacy between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River | B'Tselem \(btselem.org\)](#)
12. [Anglican Church of Southern Africa declares Israel an apartheid state | Middle East Eye](#)
13. [South Africa calls for Israel to be declared an 'apartheid state' | News | Al Jazeera](#)
14. [The UK supports Israel's right to self-defence in line with the UN Charter: UK statement at the UN Security Council - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
15. [UK arms Israel as it bombards Gaza \(declassifieduk.org\)](#)
16. [How much aid does the US give to Israel? - USAFacts](#)
17. [Right to Boycott | Protect the right to boycott](#)
18. [Palestinian Trade Unions Call for an End to Arming Israel - MERIP](#)
19. [Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom in UK Higher Education-BRISMES-ELSC.pdf](#)
20. <https://www.ueasu.org/pageassets/democracy/unionpolicy/1714-Palestine.pdf>
21. <https://www.ueasu.org/pageassets/democracy/unionpolicy/2084-Sanctuary-Campus.pdf>
22. <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/international/finance-and-scholarships/funding/humanitarian-scholarship/>
23. <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/study/funding/gaza-scholarship>
24. <https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/scholarships/university-of-sanctuary-scholarship>
25. <https://bdsmovement.net/economic-boycott>
26. [Palestinian Trade Unions Call for an End to Arming Israel - MERIP](#)

**27. [Prime Minister warned of intention to prosecute UK government officials for complicity in war crimes in Gaza – ICJP \(icjpa.org\)](https://www.icjpa.org/2023/05/10/prime-minister-warned-of-intention-to-prosecute-uk-government-officials-for-complicity-in-war-crimes-in-gaza/)**

**Proposed Amendment:**

**To remove as highlighted in bold:**

Resolve 11.f: Call upon the VC and University to uphold the institutional principles of civic responsibility to our university and global community and oppose systems of oppression against Palestine and protect student and staff freedom of speech in light of state intervention. Including: **“to acknowledge that a critique of the state of Israel should not be conflated with anti-Jewish racism and so revoke the IHRA definition of antisemitism”**

Council Resolves 14: **To condemn the British government’s unquestioning support for the Israeli state and the distortions of the mainstream media in Britain in its coverage of this conflict and support the call from Palestinian Trade Unions to halt the arms trade to Israel. (26)**

Council Resolves 15: **To support efforts to hold political leaders accountable for aiding and abetting war crimes in Gaza. (27)**

**To amend changes highlighted in bold:**

Council notes point 9: A report by BRISMES and ELSC of The Adverse Impact of the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism, which conflates legitimate criticism of the state of Israel and its policies with anti-Jewish racism. (19)

**To:** A report by BRISMES and ELSC of The Adverse Impact of the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism, which conflates legitimate criticism of the state of Israel and its policies with **antisemitism**. (19)

Council believes point two: Conflating the legitimate criticism of the Israeli government with anti-Jewish racism undermines the possibility of demonstrating solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against oppression and undermines freedom of speech and academic freedom.

**To:** Conflating the legitimate criticism of the Israeli government with **antisemitism** undermines the possibility of demonstrating solidarity with the Palestinian struggle against oppression and undermines freedom of speech and academic freedom.

Council resolves point two: call for an immediate end to the genocidal violence in Gaza and to call on its members to support and campaign for Palestinian liberation and the aim for peace and justice for Palestine.

**To:** call for a **peaceful long-term resolution to violence in Israel and Gaza and to call on its members to aim for peace and justice**

Council resolves point 6: ensure that it provides a supportive environment that upholds democratic values, diversity of thought, and the right to express opinions freely, including advocating for justice and

freedom for Palestine so its members may express their views on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and related issues without fear of punishment or censorship, in accordance with the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression

**To:** ensure that it provides a supportive environment that upholds democratic values, diversity of thought, and the right to express opinions freely **advocating for justice and peace so its members may express their views within the parameters of legal free speech according to the public orders act 1986 and the racial and religious hatred act 2006**