

A RESOLUTION of the Skyline College Academic Senate to extend the College's commitment to anti-racism to include Palestinian & SWANA communities and to call for a ceasefire in Gaza

Whereas, Skyline College, which is committed to being an anti-racist institution, has witnessed several incidents of racism against Palestinians, Arabs, and Muslims since the start of the genocide currently happening in Gaza;

Whereas, scholars of race have defined anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, and anti-Palestinian sentiment as a form of racism;

Whereas, popular conflation of Zionism with Judaism has led to the characterization of any critique of Israel, or the use of language such as "Free Palestine," "From the River to the Sea," and "ethnic cleansing" as anti-Semitic, thus preventing any calls for freedom and equality for Palestinians;

Whereas, Skyline College, which is committed to fostering a thriving learning and work environment, has used the language of political neutrality to censor faculty, staff, and administrators in discussions about Palestine on several occasions;

Whereas, while Skyline College is committed to cultivate civic-mindedness to empower self and strengthen society, it has ignored the Associated Students of Skyline College's call for the college administration to make a statement and/or for a permanent ceasefire;

Whereas, Skyline College includes Palestinian students, faculty and staff who are directly impacted by the ethnic cleansing in Gaza and increasing settler violence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including murder;

Whereas, Skyline College includes students, faculty and staff from the South West Asian and North African (SWANA from here on) region who are also directly impacted by state violence, war crimes, displacement, and exile;

Whereas, the occupation of Palestine has been recognized as apartheid by the United Nations and the International Court of Justice has ordered Israel to prevent war crimes in response to South Africa's case charging them with genocide; and

Whereas, financial support through buying, selling, and investing results in contributing to and profiting from the destruction and loss of life caused by the occupation. Support of such companies is a flagrant violation of Skyline College's commitment to anti-racism.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate calls for a ceasefire;

Resolve that, in collaboration with the Associated Students, Skyline College Academic Senate work with the Skyline College Cabinet to release a statement calling for a ceasefire, denounce the military occupation and ethnic cleansing of Gaza, and unequivocally support student and faculty activism in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with both the District Anti-Racism Council & the Equity Institute to expand cultural awareness in ways including but not limited to: expanding theory and pedagogy around anti-racism to include Palestinian, Arab, and SWANA populations, and developing anti-Muslim programming (commencing with programming about the imminent holy month of Ramadan)

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with the Learning, Equity, & Growth Series (LEGS), Student Equity & Support Programs Division and the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning to expand faculty and staff professional development about anti-racism to include training on ways to name and interrupt anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, and anti-Palestinian racism on our campus;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with the College to develop and offer culturally responsive mental health support services for students, faculty and staff who are impacted by the genocide, prioritizing Palestinians and Palestinian-Americans;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with AFT to protect academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and the rights of faculty to discuss the illegal occupation of Palestine in the classroom and at on-campus activities

without being subjected to intimidation, censorship, or threat of termination of employment or assignment,;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with the Curriculum Committee to update curricula to include Palestinian and SWANA contents in disciplines across divisions, rather than silo this content in region-specific courses or isolated in Ethnic Studies;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with the College to develop educational programming about Palestinian history, culture, and resistance via a speaker series, film screenings, and cultural events;

Resolved, that Skyline College Academic Senate work with the Skyline Cabinet to answer the call from the Associated Students to release a statement calling for a ceasefire, denounce the military occupation and ethnic cleansing of Gaza, and unequivocally support student and faculty activism in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for liberation;

Resolved, that Academic Senate work with PRIE to survey students, faculty, and staff to disaggregate Palestinian and broader SWANA categories from “Caucasian,” as they are currently described in order to make visible Skyline’s SWANA community, to encourage solidarity and coalition building across students, faculty, and staff, and to promote student activism and advocacy around SWANA issues on campus;

Resolved, that Academic Senate work with Skyline College to offer scholarships and financial support for Palestinian students impacted by the genocide in Gaza and increased violence in the West Bank, particularly those fleeing that violence; and

Resolved, that Academic Senate work with Skyline College, specifically the Bookstore and Cafe, to audit for direct or indirect contributions to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories and remove any products, profit, or financial supports that contribute to the destruction in Palestinian territories.

Background

Starting in the late 19th century, the word *Palestinian* began to be used in English and German and the word *Filastini* used in Arabic, cementing a Palestinian identity. In the 1880s, political Zionism as a colonial nation-state project emerged as a response to European anti-semitism.

The Balfour Declaration of 1917 committed England to supporting and facilitating a settler colonial project of establishing a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine without consultation with Palestinians. The League of Nations Mandate on Palestine in 1922 not only recognized the Balfour Declaration but required England to help establish Jewish self-government in Palestine. Palestinians held congresses across historic Palestine between 1919-1925 calling for an autonomous, democratic state and collectively resisted British colonial rule in the Great Revolt of 1936-1939. Ten percent of the Palestinian male population was killed, wounded, exiled or imprisoned, derailing the movement for Palestinian independence.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations passed Assembly Resolution 181, the UN Partition Plan, that divided historic Palestine into a Jewish state that received 56% of the territory when they made up a third of the population of Palestine. The Arab state received 44% of the territory, while Palestinian Arabs more than doubled the population of Jews in Palestine. In violation of the 1947 UN Partition Plan, Zionist paramilitary forces launched an attack into the UN designated Palestinian state, which led to the murder of 15,000 Palestinian Arabs and the forced displacement of another 750,000, resulting in the increase territorial claim from the 56% outlined in the UN plan to 76% of historic Palestine by the Jewish State. This is remembered as the Nakba (The Catastrophe).

In 1967, Israel occupied the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Golan Heights, destroying villages and refugee camps. This resulted in the displacement of 300,000, the fracturing of the struggle for Palestinian independence, and the building of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. This is remembered as the Naksa (the Setback). Since 1967, numerous United Nations Resolutions have called on Israel to withdraw from the territories it occupied during the Six Day War, have designated its rule as a

formal military occupation, and have deemed Israeli settlements illegal under international law.

From 1967-1987, Gaza and the West Bank experienced twenty years of brutal occupation in which Israel prevented family reunification, banned forms of political expression including artwork and the Palestinian flag, censored and banned Palestinian books and writing, and prohibited the gathering of ten or more people for a political cause. In 1987, following the impact from the first war in Lebanon, the doubling of Israeli settlers in the West Bank, and the displacement of thousands on the Egyptian border, Palestinians led the First *Intifada* (shaking off), which consisted of nonviolent mass protests and resulted in Israel's use of lethal force, killing over 1200 Palestinians, injuring more than 130,000, and imprisoning tens of thousands.

In 1981, the [United Nations](#) enshrined Palestinian right to resistance when affirming “the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial and foreign domination and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle.” The United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 calls for the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.

The desire, intent, and actions leading to ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian population is evident in the words of both Zionist leaders as well as key governmental officials in the state of Israel extending from the late 19th century to the current siege on Gaza:

- Theodore Herzl, diary entry in 1898, “We must expropriate gently the private property on the estates assigned to us. We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it employment in our own country...Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly.”
- Jewish-Ottoman Land Company draft of organization charter in 1901 stated the need to remove Arab Palestinians to “other provinces and territories of the Ottoman Empire”

- First Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion in 1949 stated, “We must do everything to ensure they (Palestinians) never do return...the old will die and the young will forget.”
- On January 28, 2024 National Security Minister of Israel, Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich signed the “Covenant of Victory and Renewal of Settlement,” which is a pledge to “grow Jewish settlements full of life” in the Gaza strip.
- On January 28, 2024 National Security Minister of Israel, Itamar Ben-Gvir “It’s time to return home, to return to Israel, it’s time to encourage immigration (referring to Gazans).”
- On January 28, 2024 Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said “Without settlement there is no security”.

The call for collective punishment of the Palestinian population in Gaza by political and military leaders of the State of Israel demonstrates intent of genocide:

- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu: “we will turn them into rubble. I say to the residents of Gaza, leave now because we will operate forcefully everywhere.”
- Oct. 7, Deputy Speaker of the Knesset, Nissim Vaturi, tweeted, “Now we all have one common goal, erasing the Gaza Strip from the face of the earth.”
- Oct. 12, President Isaac Herzog: “It’s an entire nation out there that is responsible. It’s not true this rhetoric about civilians not aware, not involved, it’s absolutely not true. We will fight until we break their backbone.”
- Oct. 12, Major General, Giora Eiland: “to create such huge pressure on Gaza that Gaza will become an area where people cannot live.”
- Nov. 11 In a TV interview, Minister of Agriculture, Avi Dichter: “We are rolling out the Nakba of Gaza, the Gazan Nakba.”
- Oct. 13 Tweet by Israeli minister of energy and infrastructure, Israel Katz, “All the civilian population in Gaza is ordered to leave immediately. We will win. They will not receive a drop of water or a single battery until they leave the world.”
- Israeli minister of energy and infrastructure, Israel Katz, “no electrical switch will be turned on, no water hydrant will be opened and no fuel truck

will enter until the Israeli abductees are returned home. Humanitarianism for humanitarianism. And no one will preach us morality.”

- Israeli army reservist, Ezra Yachin, “Be triumphant and finish them off. And don’t leave anyone behind. Erase the memory of them. Erase them, their families, mothers and children. These animals can no longer live.”
- Oct. 8 Finance Minister, Bezalel Smotrich, during an Israeli Cabinet meeting, “We need to deal a blow that hasn’t been seen in fifty years and take down Gaza.”

Since the October 7 attacks, Palestinian civilians and military personnel have disproportionately suffered death and severe injury: over 30,00 Palestinians have been killed, including at least 13,000 children, over 67,317 are wounded, thousands more are missing or presumed dead, and over 300,000 civilians are at risk of starvation from Israeli blocking of food aid. The October 7 attack killed 1,139 Israelis, including 600 civilians.

After the destruction of Al-Isra University on January 17, there are no remaining universities in Gaza. The Israeli army has explicitly targeted university Professors, killing over 95 academics.

Resources for Further Research

Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017*

Emanuel Beska and Zachary J. Foster, “The Origins of the term ‘Palestinian’ (‘Filastini’) in late Ottoman Palestine, 1898-1914,” [Academia Letters](#), Article 1884

Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*

Norman Finkelstein, *Gaza: An Inquest into Martyrdom*

Human Rights Watch, *A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution*

Walid Khalidi, *Before their Diaspora: A Photographic history of the Palestinians, 1876-1948*

Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*

[Janice's collected comments on the Resolution](#)