

MEDIA RELEASE

King's University College Faculty Association

Letter in Support of Student Action at Western University

The King's University College Faculty Association (KUCFA) joins the many associations and groups expressing public support for students' rights to peacefully assemble and protest in solidarity with Palestine. We have witnessed university administrations globally employ state violence in the form of campus police, private security, and municipal police services against peaceful student encampments. The use of trespassing laws as a justification for the removal of students' engagement in peaceful protest on university property should never supersede fundamental democratic rights such as that of peaceful assembly. We join the [Canadian Association of University Teachers \(CAUT\)](#) in unequivocally condemning any such actions by Western University and Affiliate administrations.

KUCFA calls for peace and dialogue and condemns all forms of oppression, including those associated with Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism. We stand in solidarity with all victims of violence and support our students in doing the same.

We join the [Canadian Association of University Teachers](#) in asserting that "Universities and colleges must be places that foster debate, dialogue and free expression. The forcible removal and heavy-handed arrests of peaceful student protesters who pose no demonstrable threat to campus safety are inimical to the mission of post-secondary institutions and contrary to the democratic rights expressed in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms." As places committed to the sharing, developing, and mobilizing of knowledge for the common good, universities also have a responsibility to defend the right of academic staff and students to critique their practices and contribute to social change through dialogue and action. Indeed, academic freedom and freedom of expression "[are fundamental to confronting entrenched power and systems of oppression.](#)"

For months, Western students seeking liberation for Palestine have exhausted every means possible: petitions, letters, protests, sit-ins, and meetings. The current student protests result from Western University administration's ongoing silence. We applaud students' principled stance and support their right to protest Western University's inaction peacefully. The following are their demands:

- 1. Disclose:** Any donors with direct/indirect relationships with Israel; direct/indirect investments in companies, mutual funds, and hedge funds tied to Israel; research relationships; student exchange programs; any other financial ties between Western University and Israel.

2. **Divest:** From approximately \$15 million in military contracts, including owning equity of \$1.16 million in Lockheed Martin; \$33.6 million invested in companies complicit in the occupation of Palestine and the genocide of Palestinians.
3. **Boycott:** Pass and implement the Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS) motion (as per the BDS movement); terminate all partnerships with Israeli organizations, including the Ivey-Israel Business Exchange in partnership with the Ben Gurion University.
4. **Amnesty:** Western University guarantees no repercussions or punishments, including legal, academic, or social towards any of the organizers, volunteers, or attendees at the Encampment; no release of the Encampment attendees' names or pictures to protect their identity; guarantee students will not face academic consequences if they attend, organize, or volunteer for the encampment; ensure amnesty for all students who represent the Western Divestment Coalition to negotiate on behalf of the students.

In solidarity,

King's University College Faculty Association

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