

TW: State-Sanctioned Violence, Death

RE: Solidarity with Palestinian Uprising, General Strike, and Commitment to BDS

The Simon Fraser Student Society advocates for, and stands in solidarity with, the Palestinian people in condemnation of the Israeli State's settler-colonial advancement, human rights violations, and war crimes against Palestinians. We denounce the ongoing attacks on Palestinians by the Israeli forces and the continuing escalation of violence against Palestinians following decades of settler colonialism and ethnic cleansing by the State of Israel<sup>1</sup>. The SFSS wholeheartedly deplores the repeated, unwarranted, and excessive use of force against Palestinian protestors in East Jerusalem and other areas of occupied Palestine, and the plan to displace Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah<sup>2</sup> Silwan, Lifta, and other towns and cities of Palestine.

### **State-Sanctioned Violence**

The most recent wave of violence by the State of Israel includes an impending expulsion of 28 Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah— an act of violence intended to replace Palestinians with Israeli settlers. This explicit harm is part of the broader colonial project of dispossession and thereby entails unequal residency rights and discriminatory planning policies designed to advance the ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem's Palestinian neighborhood. The aforementioned wave of violence extends to Israeli state-sanctioned violence towards Palestinians residing in Occupied Palestine. Additionally, we condemn the Israeli force's ruthless attacks on Muslim worshippers at Islam's third Holiest site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where steel-coated rubber bullets, stun grenades, and tear gas canisters were used to wound over 300 Palestinian worshippers during the holy month of Ramadan<sup>3</sup>. These attacks included those that continued during Israel's Gaza "ceasefire". Furthermore, we denounce the harassment against Palestinian-Christian worshippers on the way to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre during Easter<sup>4</sup>.

### **Colonial Infliction of Trauma**

We condemn the most recent aerial bombardments of Gaza, which were the most intense since 2014, resulting in the murder of 250+ Palestinians — 66 children, 39 women, and 2000+ wounded. Furthermore, 33 media institutions, 1,800 housing units, and 5 high-rise buildings were destroyed, leaving another 91,000 displaced. This recent wave of aggression has resulted in the displacement of 66,000 Palestinians, seeking

shelter across 58 UNRWA Schools. The remaining 25,000 had to reside with host families<sup>5</sup>. As a result of Israel's assault, as well as the continuous destruction of Gaza's infrastructures, which has been under a 13-year land, air, and sea blockade, inflicting more trauma on Palestinians. Moreover, the violence inflicted by Israel's forces has imposed unprecedented pain, hardship, and trauma on Palestinians, causing them to suffer from [anxiety disorders, PTSD](#), and [acute and as-yet-medically-unlabelled PTSD](#). We condemn the Israeli government's attacks on health workers, medical facilities, journalists, and media outlets, in addition to the attacks on activists for documenting Israeli aggressions<sup>6</sup>.

### **Western Funding of Israel**

Israeli military occupation has been funded by the United States and Canadian governments, with the US providing \$3.8 billion per year since 2016<sup>7</sup>. As of right now, this funding is intended to continue for the next 5 years. Specifically, "Government data shows Canada sent \$13.7 million in military goods and technology to Israel in 2019, or 0.4% of total arms exports."<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, US funding and military equipment have aided Israel in developing one of the most advanced militaries globally, and has made Israel's bombardment of Gaza and continued occupation of Palestine possible<sup>9</sup>. Despite the United States government calling for "a de-escalation of all parties, there is no acknowledgment that it is their funds which made the Israeli military powerful. US public opinion seems to be swinging in support of Palestinian rights, but it must go further to begin real change." This violence has also been supported by other colonial countries including Australia, France, and Belgium.

### **SFSS Call to Action**

Scholarship without action normalizes the status quo and reinforces Israel's impunity. We call on the SFU community to take a stance against Israel's settler-colonial violence inflicted on Palestinians and the occupied Palestinian territories. The SFSS pledges to initiate, support, and amplify campaigns in solidarity with Palestinian calls to join the [Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions \(BDS\)](#) movement against Israeli apartheid. We recognize and join the many student activists and student societies across so-called Canada who have been amplifying efforts such as the BDS movement in solidarity with Palestinians; and those who have been recognizing this urgency for years. We acknowledge those who speak out against these atrocities and are directly silenced and blacklisted for doing so under settler-colonial institutions, such as Universities, which censor and harass Pro-Palestinian voices and advocacy. For instance, the University of

Toronto rescinded Dr. Valentina Azarova's offer as Director of Human Rights, for her scholarly work on illegal settlements.

We stand with student-led resolutions that are demanding SFU's immediate divestment from [companies](#) that aid in Israeli colonization, occupation, and war crimes. The BDS movement seeks to end our individual and collective complicity with [Israel's apartheid regime](#)<sup>10</sup> through applying international, economic, and political pressure until Israel upholds its obligations under International Law. We affirm our commitment to speaking out in defense of the Palestinian struggle and recognizing their resistance as an Indigenous liberation movement confronting a settler-colonial state.

We stand in solidarity with all those fighting for justice, including Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and Jewish students. We stand against the targeting of Palestinian and Jewish students online, as well as on or off-campus. We implore other student societies, universities, and institutions to join in taking concrete steps to support these efforts and center Palestinian voices to end Israeli apartheid. Solidarity with all in the fight for human rights, anti-oppression, and social justice. Palestine will be free.

## Reference

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<sup>9</sup> Leifer, Joshua. "US Funds Make Israel's Bombardment of Gaza Possible. When Will They Be Halted?" *The Guardian*, 14 May 2021,  
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