*Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates*

**Call for Ceasefire in Gaza**

**WHEREAS** the Gaza Strip, often described as “[the world’s largest open-air prison](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/11/what-is-gaza-strip-the-besieged-palestinian-enclave-under-israeli-assault)” by human rights groups due to a [comprehensive blockade](https://www.unicef.org/mena/documents/gaza-strip-humanitarian-impact-15-years-blockade-june-2022) imposed by the state of Israel, which includes restrictions on air, land, and sea access, the enclosure of borders, and severe limitations on the movement of Palestinians in and out of the territory; and

**WHEREAS**, the Gaza Strip is currently enduring extreme humanitarian and living conditions, practicing [collective punishment](https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15473.doc.htm) of the Palestinian people includes shutting off all access to electricity, drinking water, food, and humanitarian aid; and

**WHEREAS**, this blockade has led to critical shortages in essential services such as electricity, drinking water, food, and medical care, placing approximately 2 million people in Gaza at imminent risk of humanitarian crisis, as reported by the United Nations; and

**WHEREAS**, [children make up](https://www.pcbs.gov.ps/portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/Press_En_ChildDayE2022.pdf) 41 percent of the West Bank’s population, and 47 percent of Gaza's population; and

**WHEREAS**, as of [January 30th, 2024](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker), in 16 weeks, Israel killed at least 26,751 Palestinians in Gaza, including more than 10,000 children, and injuring more than 65,636 Palestinians, with 8,000 missing and displaced more than 2 million which is more than 90% of the population; and

**WHEREAS**, as of [January 27th, 2024](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker), in 16 weeks, Israel killed at least 373 Palestinians in Occupied West Bank, including 99 children, and injuring at least 4,250 individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, as of January 27th, 2024, the continuous bombing by the Israel Defense Force on South Lebanon has killed over 200 Lebanese people,, injured over 500, and displaced over 73,000 individuals; and

**WHEREAS**, as of [January 16th 2024](https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/israel-kills-dozens-academics-destroys-every-university-gaza-strip-enar), Israel killed at least 4,327 students and injured 7,819, along with killing 94 university professors and 231 teachers; and

**WHEREAS**, as of January 21st 2024, ALL of Gaza's universities, more than 350 schools, and its public library have been either destroyed or completely demolished by the Israel Defense Force; and

**WHEREAS**, as of [January 21st 2024](https://bricup.org.uk/article/over-4000-students-killed-and-382-schools-bombed-and-vandalised-in-gaza-since-7-october-this-is-scholasticide/), 278 public schools and 65 affiliated with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) were bombed and vandalized in the Gaza Strip, resulting in 83 of them being severely damaged, 7 completely destroyed, and 38 schools in the West Bank were stormed and vandalized; and

**WHEREAS**, Israel has not only destroyed and demolished universities, the Israel Defense Force occupied universities and used [them](https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/israel-turns-schools-military-centres-conducting-field-executions-and-mass-killings-enar) as military bases, detention centers and on ground civilians execution spaces; and

**WHEREAS**, academics have termed this deliberate obliteration of educational institutions and the targeting of academic personnel as "[scholasticide,](https://www.thestar.com/news/world/how-israels-scholasticide-denies-palestinians-their-past-present-and-future/article_8f52d77a-b648-11ee-863d-f3411121907b.html)" highlighting it as a multifaceted assault that encompasses the destruction of Gaza's educational infrastructure, attacks on universities in both Gaza and the West Bank, and the severe harassment and aggression towards senior faculty and students supporting Palestine within the Israeli university system; and

**WHEREAS,** since October 7, Israel has committed war crimes against the Palestinian people, particularly in Gaza, revealing significant flaws in the international legal system; and

**WHEREAS**, these actions include breaches of international law during the accelerated genocide of Palestinians, with an overt availability of evidence met with global inaction or hostility, undermining the principles of “Universal Jurisdiction” in protecting against crimes against humanity; and

**WHEREAS**, over 115 days of mass-scale assaults by the Israel Defense Force throughout Gaza, the West Bank, and 48 territories have resulted in tens of thousands of war crimes and numerous violations of international laws, including but not limited to the Geneva Conventions (1949), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Genocide Convention; and

**WHEREAS**, the Israeli State’s actions have met the definitions of genocide under the 1948 UN [Genocide Convention](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocity-crimes/Doc.1_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf), evidenced by mass killings, causing serious bodily or mental harm, imposing conditions to bring about physical destruction, preventing births within the group, and forcibly transferring children; and

**WHEREAS**, the systematic targeting of civilian infrastructure, medical facilities, and educational institutions, alongside the indiscriminate bombing of Gaza, the brutalization of its residents, and the blockade of essential resources, have been documented and demand immediate, further investigation and prosecution; and

**WHEREAS**, violations under universal jurisdiction include grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity, with Israel’s actions bound to compliance due to treaty ratifications or enforcement; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 13th, the United Nations General Assembly, in a near-unanimous vote, called for an immediate and sustained humanitarian ceasefire; and

**WHEREAS**, hundreds of thousands of lives are at imminent risk if a ceasefire is not achieved, and humanitarian aid is not delivered without delay; and

**WHEREAS**, [according to an investigation conducted by the Israeli newspaper, Haaretz,](https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-09/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/the-israeli-army-has-dropped-the-restraint-in-gaza-and-data-shows-unprecedented-killing/0000018c-4cca-db23-ad9f-6cdae8ad0000) the proportion of civilian deaths in Gaza is higher than the average in all other world conflicts of the 20th century; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States of America’s Government holds immense diplomatic and appropriations powers to save civilians lives; and

**WHEREAS**, international organizations like Amnesty International, the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Rescue Committee, and many others have made a call for a ceasefire in order to prevent the further loss of life of civilians and to be in accordance with international humanitarian law; and

**WHEREAS**, sixty-six percent of American voters support a ceasefire, according to an

October 20th, 2023 Data For Progress poll, and want to see the U.S. leverage its diplomatic relationships “to prevent further violence and civilian deaths"; and

**WHEREAS**, other governing bodies at Big 10 institutions, such as the University of Michigan’s [Faculty Senate Assembly](https://record.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/240130_SenateAssembly_DivestmentResolution.pdf), have called upon their universities’ leadership to divest from their “financial holdings in companies that invest in Israel’s ongoing military campaign in Gaza”; and

**WHEREAS**, the State College Borough Council unanimously approved a resolution urging the Biden Administration to call for an immediate ceasefire and deescalation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University’s Graduate and Professional Student Association stands in solidarity with marginalized populations and aims to advocate against acts of injustice; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University, as a public institution, is bound to the tenets of the First Amendment, which outlines the right of freedom of expression and assembly; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University has stated commitments to and accountability for advancing equity, respect, and belonging in all its forms; and

​​**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University states that it strives to foster a safe environment of respect and belonging for faculty, staff, students, and members of the communities that it serves; and

**WHEREAS**, in the face of ongoing scholasticide on higher education in Gaza, the Pennsylvania State University should not remain silent and has a moral obligation to take action by withdrawing investments and cutting relationships with Israel; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University's administration has remained silent on the ongoing genocide and war crimes perpetrated by Israel against Palestine, failing to support Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese students, faculty, and staff on campus, which has contributed to an atmosphere of anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab racism and Islamophobia; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the duty of the Pennsylvania State University to recognize that the pursuit of racial justice is a fundamental and non-negotiable aspect of its governance, regardless of the potential for causing divisiveness within the community, as there will always be those who oppose progress towards equality and justice; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pennsylvania State University is reminded that the path towards true equality and inclusivity often faces resistance, and it is obligated to prioritize the rights and dignity of all individuals, especially marginalized and/or oppressed communities, over the preservation of status quo or avoidance of contentious discourse; and

**THEREFORE**, the silence of the Pennsylvania State University's administration in the face of genocide is deeply disappointing, and it is imperative that the University addresses the demands of Palestinian students, faculty, and staff, as well as their allies, including condemning Israel's war of genocide on Palestine, ensuring protection for free speech supporting Palestine, providing resources for Palestinian and Arab community members, and divesting from weapons manufacturers that arm the ongoing conflict.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, we insist that the administration of the Pennsylvania State University commits to the following actions:

1. Urges the Biden administration to immediately call for and facilitate de-escalation and a ceasefire, including the release of hostages, to urgently end the current violence in Gaza;
2. Calls upon the Biden administration to promptly send and facilitate the entry of humanitarian assistance at the scale needed into Gaza;
3. Condemn Israel for the war crimes it has committed against the Palestinian people since 1948 and especially in 2023 - 2024 in Gaza and the occupied West Bank
4. Denounce censorship, harassment, intimidation, and repression of any kind, especially those targeting Palestinian, SWANA, Muslim, and Jewish students as they exercise their right to free speech, academic freedom, activism, and dissent.
5. Denounce the targeting of students, staff, and faculty for their political beliefs, including their potential support for the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement against the actions of Israel against Palestine.
6. Guarantee that no retaliatory action will be taken against students, staff, and faculty who choose to exercise their rights of freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.
7. Institute restorative justice practices (i.e., repairing harm and restoring relationships) when holding accountable offenders that target, alienate, and intimidate Palestinians, SWANA, Muslims, and members of the Jewish community, as well as other students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
8. Reject the use of language that dehumanizes and erases the suffering of Palestinian people.
9. Reject the use of “terrorism” to describe Palestine solidarity on campus and in the communities that the Pennsylvania State University serves and refuse the framing of anti-Zionism as antisemitism.
10. Uplift the work of and protect Palestine studies scholars and commit to establishing an Arab American studies curriculum across the consortium.
11. Supports all of its students and condemns all forms of racism, bigotry, and discrimination, including islamophobia and antisemitism;
12. Requests that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the President of the United States and our Congressional Delegation, advocating for the dignity and safety of residents in every community;
13. Recognizes the need to address the root causes of crises for a pathway to lasting peace and justice;
14. Divest from its financial holdings in companies that invest in Israel’s ongoing military campaign in Gaza.

Now, be it further resolved that upon passage, a copy of this resolution be sent to President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., Senator John K. Fetterman, and Representative Glenn W. Thompson.