

Motion on Scholasticide, Supporting Palestinian Education, and a Boycott of Israeli Academic Institutions

June 25, 2024

1. Whereas MUNFA's collective agreement enshrines academic freedom, the defence of which includes, "an obligation on all members of the University community," (CA [Article 2.02](#));
2. Whereas academic freedom, "does not require neutrality on the part of the individual, nor does it preclude commitment. Rather it makes commitment possible," (CA 2.02);
3. Whereas the Israeli military has destroyed or damaged all 12 universities in Gaza, alongside 80% of Gaza's schools, and has killed more than 5,479 students, 261 teachers and 95 university professors in a [specific campaign](#) of scholasticide;
4. Whereas Israel's attack on Palestinian education contributes to a system of [apartheid](#) and dispossession targeting the cultural and intellectual life of the Palestinian people, preventing them from living, thriving, and studying, and excluding them from free and equal participation in the international academic community;
5. Whereas the international [BDS movement](#) has since 2002 called for an academic boycott to undermine Israeli academic support for the military occupation and control of Palestine;
6. Whereas Technion (Haifa) has a [Military Research Institute](#) dedicated to the development of IDF technology, and Israeli state technology including remote-controlled [D9 bulldozers used in demolishing Palestinian villages](#), and military technology for export;
7. Whereas Technion is proud of its contribution "to the education of high-level engineers and scientists who would lead the IDF, the [Israeli] government agencies and the [Israeli] defense and security industries," and offers [classes designed for IDF officers](#);

8. Whereas Hebrew University of Jerusalem is in the process of [opening a military base](#) on campus in [collaboration with the Israeli army](#);
9. Whereas Tel Aviv University is affiliated with the [Institute for National Security Studies](#), a think tank for the Israeli Army that has been instrumental in the [consolidation of illegal settlements](#) in the West Bank;
10. Whereas [Tel Aviv University invests in Xtend, the manufacturer of the Quadcopter drones](#) with sniper rifles;
11. Whereas Israeli academics have been instrumental in [justifying Israeli crimes against humanity](#);
12. Whereas [Israeli universities persecuted, in tandem with police, Arab students](#) who opposed Israel's invasion of Gaza;
13. Whereas Hebrew University of Jerusalem suspended Palestinian feminist [Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian](#) for opposing the genocide in Gaza;
14. Whereas every Israeli academic institution has in one way or another not opted to take a neutral, apolitical position toward the Israeli occupation but to fully support the Israeli security forces and [apartheid](#) policies toward the Palestinians ([Keller](#), 35-41);
15. Whereas we refuse to normalize academic complicity in the oppression of the Palestinian people;
16. Whereas Palestinian Higher Education institutions and Gazan academics and administrators have issued a [Unified Call for Justice and Freedom](#) and an [open letter](#) respectively, calling on their international counterparts to take action in their support and defence.
17. Whereas [several Faculty Associations across Canada](#) have already passed motions committed to a boycott of Israeli academic institutions,

We affirm that:

18. Education is a fundamental human right, enshrined in [international law](#) and a crucial pillar for a people denied their inalienable right to self-determination, in the preservation of their identity, heritage, and civic life;

19. While education is a fundamental right, academic universities should not be complicit in the [scholasticide](#), nor should academic research be integral to the enactment of crimes against humanity.

We thus move MUNFA to:

20. Actively work to support the boycott of Israeli academic institutions, ending any existing co-operation and barring any future co-operation **between Memorial University and Israeli academic and cultural institutions** including exchange programs, partnerships, scholarships, and fellowships;
21. Call on the university to make every effort possible to build academic links with Palestinian universities and academics. Explore collaborative initiatives such as twinings, exchanges, joint projects, scholarship and exchange programmes, academic fellowships and partnerships that contribute positively to the [Palestinian educational sector](#) under extreme threat.