

We, a group of students and student organizations at Northeastern University School of Law, write to affirm our solidarity with the Palestinian people and their continued resistance to Israeli settler-colonialism and apartheid.<sup>1</sup> The Balfour Declaration, signed by the British in 1917, legitimized the Zionist project by claiming Palestinian land as the state of Israel.<sup>2</sup> Since then, Palestinians have been subjected to the longest ongoing military occupation in history<sup>3</sup> and constant land theft. Nevertheless, their right to resist this oppression is enshrined in international law.<sup>4</sup>

We mourn the Israeli lives lost this weekend—and we mourn the lives of Palestinians who have been killed at disproportionately higher rates since the establishment of Israel.<sup>5</sup> We must counter dominant media narratives, which insist that this attack was “unprovoked.” Far from “unprovoked,” the Gazan’s have been subjected to an open-air prison for the last 16 years.<sup>6</sup> They have been starved, trapped, deprived of water and electricity, and bombed since the siege began. The events of October 7th, 2023, were acts of resistance to oppression. Calling this attack “unprovoked” is wholly inaccurate and misleading.

As such, we condemn Northeastern President Aoun’s irresponsible and unjust framing of Hamas’ attack as the reason why ‘war now rages,’ which erases 75 years of Israeli settler-colonial violence. In propagating this inaccurate narrative, this institution has contributed to the normalization of Israeli settler-colonialism and the oppression of Palestinians.

As of October 13th, the Israeli military has blocked all electricity, food, and fuel from Gaza, which is one of the most densely populated regions in the world.<sup>7</sup> In ordering this blockade, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant referred to the Palestinian people as “human animals.”<sup>8</sup> Over the past several days, Israel has attacked schools,<sup>9</sup> banks, and residential buildings.<sup>10</sup> 1.1 million people were ordered to evacuate within 24 hours, which the United Nations has deemed impossible without “without devastating humanitarian consequences.”<sup>11</sup> Israel has then bombed the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza, which is used as a crucial corridor for delivering aid and recently as a route of escape for Palestinians.<sup>12</sup> At least 70 people have been killed attempting to flee.<sup>13</sup> The hospitals, full of wounded, and with no power or

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101\\_this\\_is\\_apartheid&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1697286459520195&usq=AOvVaw3BicjeFp1DmitEH97Na-Co](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1697286459520195&usq=AOvVaw3BicjeFp1DmitEH97Na-Co)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2018/11/2/more-than-a-century-on-the-balfour-declaration-explained>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/50-years-after-1967-the-u-s-and-occupation-by-another-name/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/7/20/palestinians-have-a-legal-right-to-armed-struggle>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ochaopt.org/data/casualties>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/14/gaza-israels-open-air-prison-15>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/9/israel-announces-total-blockade-on-gaza>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-war-fighting-human-animals-defence-minister>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/10/why-bomb-schools-gaza-families-have-no-safe-space-a-mid-israeli-attacks>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-war-gaza-civilian-buildings-bombed>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/10/13/israel-orders-1-1-million-people-in-gaza-to-move-south-what-to-know>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-war-gaza-egypt-border-bombed-multiple-times>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/13/israel-hamas-live-iran-says-new-fronts-may-open-if-gaza-bombing-continues>

electricity, are unable to evacuate. At least 1900 Palestinian lives have been lost in the past week alone. What is taking place is the escalation of a genocidal campaign to eliminate Palestinian people from Gaza, — and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened that “this is only the beginning.”<sup>14</sup>

We stand firmly against Zionism, a political ideology that endangers our Palestinian and Jewish comrades alike. **We refute any notion that being Anti-Zionist is inherently anti-semitic.** Under international law, occupied people have the right to armed resistance against the occupying power. In 1982, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed Resolution 37/43, reaffirming the “inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, sovereignty, independence, and return to Palestine” and reaffirming the “legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity, and liberation from colonial and foreign occupation by all available means, **including armed struggle.**”<sup>15</sup> Through the violent theft of their homelands, their enclosure in the open air prisons of Gaza and the West Bank, and the removal of all avenues of peaceful resolution, the Palestinian people have been given no choice but to resist their oppressors by violent means.

To those that condemn the use of violence by the Palestinians, remember that they have consistently used peaceful methods to no avail. During the Great March of Return, peaceful Palestinian protesters were shot by Israeli snipers. When Palestinians merely write, author, or tweet about their lived experience, they are met with vitriol. Palestinians have been forcibly removed from their homes by settlers, imprisoned by the state, and subjected to collective punishment. Palestinians have tried peace talks, negotiations, conferences, all to realize that at the end of the day, Israel, backed by the support of the United States, had no intention to end its colonial regime. To condemn their resistance is to ask them to die quietly.

As students in the United States, we join the call for the U.S. government to cease its provision of military funding to Israel, which is estimated at \$3 billion annually, making Israel the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II.<sup>16</sup> As students at Northeastern, we join the calls for the University to sever ties with private military companies, such as Raytheon Technologies, that directly profit from war and produce weapons used to commit war crimes.<sup>17</sup> We call for our professors and the administration to refrain from using harmful, prejudicial, and derogatory rhetoric that erases the injustices against the Palestinian people. Additionally, we call on each other to join existing organizations building networks of solidarity with Palestine, including the [Not on Our Dime](#) campaign in New York, [the BDS Movement](#) which has a chapter in Boston, [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), [IfNotNow](#), and the [Adalah Justice Project](#), among others.

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<sup>14</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/news/liveblog/2023/10/13/israel-hamas-live-iran-says-new-fronts-may-open-if-gaza-bombing-continues>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2017/7/20/palestinians-have-a-legal-right-to-armed-struggle>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2016/9/15/five-reasons-why-us-israel-military-deal-stinks>.

<sup>17</sup><https://huntnewsnu.com/71292/campus/sga/sga-passes-bill-calling-on-northeastern-to-sever-ties-with-private-military-companies/>

As articulated by Jewish Voice for Peace’s recent statement, we stand with everyone “with family on the ground [who] are terrified for loved ones. We grieve for the lives of those already lost and remain committed to a future where every life is precious and all people live in freedom and safety.”<sup>18</sup> We recognize that to stand in solidarity with Palestine is to stand in solidarity with all marginalized peoples facing oppression at the hands of colonial powers and in support of Indigenous liberation. We understand that we are not truly free until Palestine is free.

Signed,  
A coalition of Northeastern University School of Law Students

**Addendum regarding redaction of signatories:**

The Northeastern Law students that have drafted and/or signed on to this statement have made the difficult decision to redact the names of their respective organizations. In light of the ongoing backlash against students throughout the United States articulating solidarity with the Palestinian people, we are redacting our names in order to protect our fellow students from similar retaliation. We note that this backlash flies in the face of many institutions’ purported commitment to freedom of discussion and speech.

Student Organization Sign-Ons

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/2023/10/statement23-10-07/>