

The 40th Session of the Student Body Senate

Florida International University

Miami, Florida

S.R. 04 014

Ceasefire Now!

IN THE SENATE

November 15, 2023

CASE Senator Daniel Salup-Cid; Senate President Kaily LaChapelle, SIPA Senator Zahir Mansuri, Maria Franzblau, student; Oscar Alvarez, student; Judith Chavarria, student; Tara Mahmoud, student; Amna Ibrahim, student introduced the following resolution, which was presented on the Senate floor

A RESOLUTION

To call for a ceasefire and an end to the siege of Gaza; to call upon the university to put out a statement condemning human rights violations; to call on FIU President Kenneth Jessell to acknowledge the ongoing genocide; to demand that FIU divest from corporations and weapons manufacturers profiting from the genocide; to commit to academic freedom and the right of students and faculty to criticize the actions of Israel.

Be it enacted by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University assembled,

Daniel Salup-Cid

Zahir Mansuri

Kaily LaChapelle

Whereas, in previous years, the university has released statements and addressed different political conflicts of oppression.

Whereas, the statement sent to students by Florida International University President Kenneth Jessell on October 8th, 2023, and the follow-up email sent on October 27th, 2023, failed to acknowledge the systemic oppression that the Palestinian people have faced since 1948 or the thousands of Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli forces since the start of this most recent conflict.

Whereas, President Biden has refused to acknowledge the death toll of Palestinian civilians, including children, and has continued to support Israel's siege of Gaza despite the worsening humanitarian crisis.

Whereas, there is broad, popular and growing support for a ceasefire, with mass demonstrations being organized across the globe, including a recent march on Washington which included around 300,000¹ people, and a reported 66% of likely voters agreeing with ceasefire².

Whereas, we condemn the killing of all civilians including Hamas' massacre of over 1,200 Israelis on October 7th, 2023 and Israel's slaughter of over 24,000 Palestinians since, including thousands of children³.

Whereas, we unequivocally condemn antisemitism and islamophobia and affirm that any just resolution to this conflict must reject religious extremism.

Whereas, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) has dropped over 25,000 tons of explosives on the Gaza Strip,⁴ a densely populated area only 25 miles long and 4-8 miles wide, and IDF

¹ El-Bawab, Nadine. "Thousands of Protesters Gather in DC to Call for a Cease-Fire in Gaza." ABC News, 2023. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/thousands-protesters-gather-dc-call-cease-fire-gaza/story?id=104633410>.

² Abby Springs, "Voters Agree the U.S. Should Call for a Ceasefire and de-Escalation of Violence in Gaza to Prevent Civilian Deaths," Data For Progress, October 20, 2023, <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2023/10/19/voters-agree-the-us-should-call-for-a-ceasefire-and-de-escalation-of-violence-in-gaza>.

³ "Photos: More Death and Destruction in Gaza as Israeli Attacks Continue," Al Jazeera, November 13, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2023/11/13/photos-more-death-and-destruction-in-gaza-as-israeli-attacks-continue>.

⁴ Hanna Duggal and Shakeeb Asrar, "Israel's Attacks on Gaza: The Weapons and Mapping the Scale of Destruction," Al Jazeera, November 11, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/11/9/israel-attacks-on-gaza-weapons-and-scale-of-destruction>.

spokesperson Daniel Hagari has declared that their “Emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy.”⁵

Whereas, counter to establishment framing, this is not a conflict between two equal parties, and stems from decades of oppression and violence under the Israel regime.

Whereas, Israel controls all economic aspects of Palestinian welfare alongside travel restrictions placed on Palestinians within and outside of the West Bank, creating a caste system using identification cards to heavily limit Palestinians and their movement and strip them of many of their basic human rights.⁶

Whereas, Gaza has been under an Israeli blockade since 2007, stripping them of basic necessities and freedom of movement, leading Gaza to be commonly known as “the world’s largest open-air prison.”⁷

Whereas, The United Nations 1948 Genocide Convention defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.⁸

Whereas, in December 2023, South Africa has taken the State of Israel to court in the International Court of Justice for allegations of committing genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, in violation of the Genocide Convention, in a case supported by 24 countries.

Whereas, under International Law, the Palestinian people have the right to resist the illegal occupation and settlements in the West Bank and illegal blockade and bombing of Gaza, without targeting civilians or engaging in religious bigotry.¹⁰

⁵ Bethan McKeran, “‘Emphasis Is on Damage, Not Accuracy’: Ground Offensive into Gaza Seems Imminent,” *The Guardian*, October 10, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/10/right-now-it-is-one-day-at-a-time-life-on-israels-frontline-with-gaza>.

⁶ “Israel’s Occupation: 50 Years of Dispossession,” Amnesty International, July 29, 2021, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/06/israel-occupation-50-years-of-dispossession/>.

⁷ “Gaza: Israel’s ‘open-Air Prison’ at 15,” Human Rights Watch, October 11, 2023, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/14/gaza-israels-open-air-prison-15>.

⁸ “Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,” United Nations, accessed November 15, 2023, https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.1_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf.

¹⁰ Ihsan Adel, “Do Palestinians Have the Right to Resist, and What Are the Limits?,” *Law for Palestine*, October 20, 2023, <https://law4palestine.org/do-palestinians-have-the-right-to-resist-and-what-are-the-limits-short-article/>.

Whereas, the Jewish people are not responsible for the actions of the Israeli government and the Palestinian fight is not reducible to Hamas' actions, rather the Palestinian fight is rooted in fighting against colonization and oppression for all within the region.

Whereas, the oppression and war crimes committed against Palestinians and Arabs residing in the region, especially those in Gaza, has driven them to engage in this mass movement of decolonization.

Whereas, we oppose Israeli settler colonialism which aims to remove Palestinians through illegal settlements and mass displacement and annex Palestinian land.

Whereas, we uphold the right of Israeli Jews to live in peace and safety in the region, with full democratic rights, but on the basis of Palestinians having equal rights and the Palestinian diaspora having the right of return.

Whereas, millions of people have taken to the streets across the world to demand a ceasefire, including thousands of Jews in the US, represented by groups like Jewish Voices for Peace and If Not Now,¹² and in anti-war protests in Israel.¹³

Whereas, the effect of Israel's state-sanctioned violence also extends to all those that support Palestinian liberation abroad, including students and professors, since they face retaliation and educational, professional, and personal threats from organizations such as, but not limited to, the Canary Mission.¹⁴

Whereas, chapters of Students for Justice in Palestine have been banned on false grounds of supporting terrorism for acknowledging and criticizing the genocide in Gaza.¹⁵

Whereas, Palestinian students have consistently felt and continue to feel unheard and unrecognized by the University for disregarding the ongoing crisis, despite a responsibility to advocate for Palestinian students.

Whereas, Florida Senate Bill 470 (2024) would likely prohibit financial aid and in state tuition for students that publicly support or protest for "foreign terrorist organization", which would severely affect the Palestinian community and allies in the ability to advocate for self-liberation in response to Israeli war crimes, apartheid, and genocide; seeing as the Florida State

¹² Claire Savage, "Jewish Protesters and Allies Block Israeli Consulate in Chicago, Demanding a Cease-Fire in Gaza," The Independent, November 13, 2023, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/ap-israeli-jewish-jewish-voice-for-peace-american-jews-b2446634.html>.

¹³ Natasha Roth-Rowland, "Risking Arrest and Assault, Israelis Begin Protesting Gaza War," +972 Magazine, October 31, 2023, <https://www.972mag.com/israeli-protest-gaza-war-repression/>.

¹⁴ Alex Kane, "'it's Killing the Student Movement': Canary Mission's Blacklist of Pro-Palestine Activists Is Taking a Toll," The Intercept, November 30, 2018, <https://theintercept.com/2018/11/22/israel-boycott-canary-mission-blacklist/>.

¹⁵ Andrew Hay, "Florida's Desantis Bans pro-Palestinian Student Group," Reuters, October 26, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/floridas-desantis-bans-pro-palestinian-student-group-2023-10-25/>.

Government has made it clear those who stand against genocide have already been claimed to support terrorism,¹⁶

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Student Body calls for an immediate ceasefire, an end to Israel's siege of Gaza, and an end to US military aid to fund this genocide.

Resolved, the Senate of the student body calls for the release of Israeli civilian hostages held in Gaza in exchange for Palestinian prisoners being held in Israel, including children, people being held without trial, and political prisoners.

Resolved, the Student Government Association (SGA) calls upon Florida International University (FIU) to release a statement, with input from the authors of this resolution and affected student groups, condemning the human rights violations and collective punishment that the Israeli Defense Forces are committing against Palestinian people.

Resolved, SGA calls on FIU President Kenneth Jessell to acknowledge the ongoing genocide in Gaza and implicate the Israeli state as the perpetrator.

Resolved, SGA calls on FIU to divest from all corporations and weapons manufacturers which profit from arming the Israeli Defense Forces.

Resolved, in line with the principle of academic freedom, SGA calls on FIU administration to not threaten Students for Justice in Palestine or any other student organization that criticizes the actions of Israel. Individual students and faculty will also not be threatened and will be provided adequate resources in the case of online or physical harassment.

¹⁶ "The Florida Senate." Senate Bill 470 (2024) - The Florida Senate, <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2024/470>

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Senate Resolution Transmission Form

This resolution is presented by the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University. It is presented by the Senate President Pro-Tempore and affixed with the signature of the Senate President. Both the Senate President and the Senate President Pro-Tempore affirm that the information presented below is accurate and that the resolution has successfully passed in the Senate of the Student Body. The resolution is presented on this day and at this hour for signature or veto.

<i>SR 04 000</i>	
Date Introduced:	<i>00/00/0000</i>

Committees Assigned:	(1) Committee Name 1 (2) Committee Name 2 (3) Committee Name 3		
Vote in Committee 1: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	0 <i>For</i>	0 <i>Against</i>	0 <i>Abstaining</i>
Vote in Committee 2: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	0 <i>For</i>	0 <i>Against</i>	0 <i>Abstaining</i>
Vote in Committee 3: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	0 <i>For</i>	0 <i>Against</i>	0 <i>Abstaining</i>
Vote on the Senate Floor: <i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>	0 <i>For</i>	0 <i>Against</i>	0 <i>Abstaining</i>
_____ Signature of the Senate President		_____ Signature of the Senate President Pro Tempore	

Presidential Signature of a Senate Resolution

On this day, at this time, and in this place, the Senate of the Student Body at Florida International University does hereby present this resolution to the desk of the President of the Student Body for signature or veto. The Senate has passed this resolution and all its accompaniments, in accordance with the Constitution and Statutes of the Student Government Association at Florida International University. It is presented in good faith, Whereas the officers of the Senate have affixed their signatures to affirm that the resolution has followed due procedure and is valid. The Senate will await your decision.

Kaily Lachapelle, Senate President

Tiara Campbell, Senate President Pro-Tempore

Karina Hernandez, Senate Floor Leader

Alexander P. Sutton, Student Body President

Approved

Vetoed