

October 20, 2023

Andrew Martin, Chancellor

Beverly R. Wendland, Provost

Scot R. Bemis, Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and Institutional Equity

Julie Hail Flory, Vice Chancellor for Marketing and Communications

Casey Jenkerson, Director of Employer Engagement, Center for Career Engagement

The Board of Trustees

The Washington University administration remains complicit in Israel's genocide of Palestinians. While Chancellor Martin quickly condemned Hamas for its attacks on Israel, he has been silent as the Israeli Army starves the people of Gaza with a complete blockade of electricity, food, and water. Even when students and professors on our campus threaten Palestinians and call for ethnic cleansing, the administration says nothing. And as Boeing delivers thousands of bombs for Israel to drop on the Gaza Strip, our university invites the company to campus for recruitment.

We demand that Washington University condemn both Israel's genocide in Palestine and threats against Palestinians on our campus. It must also divest from Boeing for its role in arming mass murder, canceling the recruitment event next Tuesday and all future involvement with the company.

If the University refuses to hear our demands, we will stage a walkout on Wednesday the 25th at 10:15 am. We will assemble on Mudd Field to protest our university's complicity in the genocide. Students, we urge you to join us in voicing our dissent. Professors, we ask that you cancel your Wednesday morning classes or tell your students that you will withhold any consequences for walking out.

The demands below are not enough to fully divest the University from apartheid and genocide, but they represent an essential starting point. If it wanted to, the administration could take each of these actions tomorrow. Choosing not to would further demonstrate its endorsement of mass murder in Palestine and Islamophobia on our campus.

1. Condemn the genocide.

Chancellor Martin's October 10th statement on the recent violence in occupied Palestine implicitly endorses Israel's ongoing genocide against Palestinians. Martin frames his sympathy for grieving students with a racist double standard where violence against Israelis is "horrific," "heinous," and "simply beyond comprehension," while violence against Palestinians is a "humanitarian crisis" with no perpetrator or intent. He also describes Israeli deaths actively as "attacks against" while referring to Palestinian deaths passively as "lives lost." In fact, he never even refers to those dead in Gaza as Palestinian. Martin's statement devalues the lives of Palestinians and obfuscates Israel's genocidal blockade and airstrikes, which have killed thousands of Palestinians in the past two weeks alone.

Martin also casts Hamas' attacks as the first cause of the subsequent violence, completely disregarding over 75 years of Israel's colonial occupation. For decades, Israeli settlers have violently expelled Palestinians from their homes, forcing millions into broken fragments of their

ancestral land. In the occupied territories, the Israeli Army enforces apartheid with torture, assassination, and airstrikes on medics, journalists, and ordinary people. In light of this long history of state terror, Martin's choice not to label the IDF as terrorists (a term he reserves exclusively for Hamas) deepens his racist double standard.

Martin's statement pretends to be a neutral recognition of both Palestinian and Israeli grief, but it is ultimately a one-sided endorsement of Israel's apartheid and genocide in Palestine. By refusing to acknowledge both historical reality and present-day violence, the administration defends Israel's actions. As an institution of higher education, holding great influence within the broader St. Louis community, WashU's acceptance of genocide manufactures consent for Israeli atrocities.

For the millions of Palestinians facing murder at the hands of the Israeli government, and for the safety of those students who stand in solidarity with Palestine, the University must denounce the genocide and apologize for its grossly negligent rhetoric.

We demand that the University release a statement explicitly condemning Israel's apartheid and genocide in Palestine.

2. Protect students.

Chancellor Martin's Islamophobic statement has also contributed to an increasingly unsafe environment on campus. Many Palestinian, Muslim, and brown students have reported being threatened and harassed on social media, as well as being subjected to an increased number of racist interactions. While Palestinian students are silenced and admonished for flying their own flag, those in support of Israel freely display the logo of the IDF, an organization that has murdered thousands of Palestinians in the last two weeks alone.

Seth Crosby, a high-ranking director within the medical school, actively called for genocide on Friday the 13th. He called the murder of Palestinians a "much-needed cleansing," referring to them as "not human." For over a week, the University has neglected to comment on his actions publicly or to officially fire him. In conjunction with Chancellor Martin's ignorant statement, the administration's failure to condemn this fascistic language shows an absolute disregard for the safety of its students. Calling for violence is not covered by academic freedom of expression. Beyond a public condemnation of harmful language, WashU has an obligation to hold perpetrators accountable for the harm they cause.

The University's reprehensible inaction and harmful rhetoric contribute to a growing culture of Islamophobic violence across the country, generating unsafe conditions for Palestinian, Muslim, and brown people. The WashU administration has a history of silencing Muslim students and turning a blind eye to Islamophobia on its campus, and it must act now to rectify these injustices.

We demand that the University:

- **publicly denounce the actions of Seth Crosby; and**
- **protect the lives of its Palestinian, Muslim, and brown students by holding students and employees accountable for Islamophobic actions.**

3. Cut ties with war profiteer Boeing.

Boeing is the third largest weapons company in the world, with over half of its revenue coming from military products and services. Every year, the company sells billions of dollars of weapons to the U.S. and Israeli militaries. In the past week, Boeing has doubled down on its

support for the genocide of Palestinians by continuing to arm the Israeli Army. On October 10th, as Israeli airstrikes targeted schools and hospitals in Gaza, the company sped the delivery of 1,000 guided bombs to Israel. These bombs were made in Boeing's St. Louis area factory and have already been used to kill thousands of Palestinian people. While Israeli warplanes drop Boeing's bombs on the Gaza Strip, WashU plans to welcome the company to its campus for an entire day of recruitment events this Tuesday. In doing so, the administration encourages students to seek jobs at Boeing and provides the warmongering company a platform to push false narratives on the student body. By using the University's people and resources to create knowledge for Boeing, WashU actively contributes to the company's ability to arm a genocide in Palestine. Because Boeing repurposes research on commercial products to develop genocidal military technology, any relationship with Boeing is unacceptable.

A complete cessation of WashU's relationship with Boeing is long overdue. We demand that WashU:

- **condemn Boeing's role in directly enabling genocide;**
- **refuse monetary and other support from Boeing;**
- **cut off all current and future collaborations with Boeing, including the Boeing Center for Supply Chain Innovation; and**
- **refuse to host Boeing recruiters, beginning by canceling the events taking place this Tuesday, October 24th.**

As WashU students, we have both the opportunity and the obligation to dissent from our institution and stand in solidarity with Palestine. If our demands are not met, we will make them heard on Wednesday.

Signed,

Coalition of WUSTL Students for Palestine