



Resolution 51: Calling for Cornell to Follow its Divestment Guidelines and Divest from Systemic Violence Against Civilians in Gaza

Abstract: This resolution calls upon the Board of Trustees to divest from companies complicit in committing ‘morally reprehensible actions,’ including perpetrating plausible genocide, maintaining an apartheid state in Occupied Palestine, and perpetuating systemic cruelty to children throughout Palestine during the war.

Sponsored by: Jewish Voice for Peace, Students for Justice in Palestine, Cornell Young Democratic Socialists of America, Cornell Progressives, People’s Organizing Collective Cornell, Climate Justice Cornell, La Asociación Latina, MEChA, Native American and Indigenous Students at Cornell, Black Student United

Reviewed by: DEI Committee, 01/31/2024, 6-5-1

Type of Action: Resolution

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Current Status: Presented

Whereas, in 2016, the Board of Trustees approved a ‘[Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests](#)’ in which the university must consider divesting from companies that, through their “action or inaction,” partake in “morally reprehensible activities” such as “apartheid, genocide, human trafficking, slavery, and systemic cruelty to children” and perpetuate “harm so grave that it would be inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University,”

Whereas, the [University Policy 4.6: Standards of Ethical Conduct](#) states that “[a]ll executive officers, trustees, faculty, principal investigators, staff, student employees, and others acting on behalf of the university have a responsibility to ensure that all funds received are used prudently [and] ethically,”

Whereas, at the time of writing, the [UNRWA reports](#) that state of Israel’s invasion of Gaza during the war has killed more than 23,700 people since October 7, 2023, with 61,000 people having been injured and over 1.9 million of Gaza’s 2.3 million person population having been displaced,



Whereas, according to the [International Court of Justice](#), “At least some of the acts and omissions alleged by South Africa to have been committed by the state of Israel in Gaza appear to be capable of falling within the provisions of the [Genocide] Convention,” amounting to the court finding the accusation of genocide to be plausible,

Whereas, [Amnesty International](#), [Human Rights Watch](#), and the [United Nations](#) have all described the Israeli occupation as an apartheid state,

Whereas, in the course of its occupation of Palestinian land, [Save the Children](#) reports that the state of Israel has systematically prosecuted hundreds of Palestinian children per year in military courts, holding them without trial where they are frequently subjected to sexual, psychological, and physical violence in Israeli prisons,

Whereas, Cornell in its [2019 core values](#) claims a commitment to “learning, teaching, scholarship, and innovation” that is directly contradicted by its partnerships with and investments in the companies complicit in the [destruction of all seven of Gaza’s universities](#), the [murder of ninety-four university professors](#), and the [interruption of the education of 625,000 school-age Palestinian children](#),

Whereas, Cornell’s theme of “[Freedom of Expression](#)” for the 2023-24 academic year directly contradicts its partnerships with and investments in companies complicit in the [murders of over one hundred journalists](#),

Whereas, the inconsistencies between the harm that the following companies perpetuate and Cornell’s stated core values constitute grounds for the consideration of divestment,

Whereas, there is precedent for socially responsible divestment from companies complicit in morally reprehensible acts, such as Cornell University’s [moratorium on fossil fuel investments](#) in May 2022 and the [liquidation of Cornell’s holdings in Sudan](#) (including government bonds and oil company stocks) in light of the Sudanese government’s involvement in genocide in 2006,

Whereas, Cornell University holds portfolio and direct investments in corporations that profit from Israel’s military occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, thereby making Cornell complicit in human rights abuses and violations of international law,

Whereas, Cornell University has [partnerships with weapons manufacturers](#) including BAE Systems, Boeing, and Lockheed Martin, each of which produces weapons used by the state of Israel’s military that have caused unprecedented harm to the civilians in Gaza,

Whereas, [The Nation](#) detailed Cornell University’s [partnership with the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology](#) (which contributes directly to the research and development of geospatial,



intelligence, and weapons technologies used by the Israeli military) at the Cornell Tech campus in New York City,

Whereas, Cornell University, as a result of these institutional and financial ties, does not currently take a neutral position on the occupation of the Palestinian Territories, which as a result, has harmed affected students, staff, and faculty,

Whereas, the following illustrative and non-exhaustive list of corporations—which Cornell invests in and profits from—participate actively in the abuses and violations that constitute the aforementioned claims of plausible genocide, apartheid, and systemic cruelty toward children,

Whereas, [BAE Systems](#) provides munitions, missile launching kits, combat aircraft and armored vehicles used by the Israeli military in the mass destruction of homes and civilian infrastructure,

Whereas, [Boeing](#) manufactures attack helicopters, combat aircraft, missiles, bombs and battlefield laser systems for the Israeli army, as well as intelligence and surveillance systems that are used to surveil Palestinian civilians in Occupied Palestine,

Whereas, [General Dynamics](#) supplies weapon systems and components for Israeli armored combat and personnel vehicles, as well as bombs that are used indiscriminately in crowded residential areas,

Whereas, [L3Harris Technologies](#) components are integrated into multiple weapon systems used by the Israeli military, including Israel's air-to-ground bombs as well as its main warplanes, battle tanks, and warships,

Whereas, [Leonardo SpA](#) provides the 72mm and 76mm guns which are installed on Israeli warships that maintain the naval blockade on Gaza, which has been ongoing since 2007 and constitutes collective punishment,

Whereas, [Lockheed Martin](#) supplies the Israeli government with fighter jets, attack helicopters, and Hellfire missiles,

Whereas, [Northrop Grumman](#) provides missiles that are integrated into Israeli warships, attack helicopters, and fighter jets, among other weapons,

Whereas, [RTX](#) supplies the state of Israel with missiles and bombs that are used against crowded residential areas, as well as weapon systems, components, and maintenance services to the Israeli Air Force,

Whereas, [ThyssenKrupp](#) makes a multitude of weapons and vehicles for the Israeli military, including but not limited to submarines, warships, naval electronics, towers for battle tanks and artillery guns, and machine gun mountings



Cornell University
Student Assembly

Whereas, Cornell’s failure to begin the process for divestment from the aforementioned companies is a breach of the Board of Trustees’ Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests,

Whereas, peer institutions across the United States, such as [Brown University](#), [Stanford University](#), the [University of California at Berkeley](#), the [University of Michigan](#), [Northwestern University](#), and the [University of Chicago](#) have passed resolutions to divest from companies that profit from the plausible genocide, apartheid, and systematic cruelty to children in Occupied Palestine,

Be it therefore resolved, that Cornell University must execute its 2016 ‘Standard and Process for Review of Divestment Requests’ in which the university must consider divesting from companies that, through their “action or inaction,” partake in “morally reprehensible activities” such as “apartheid, genocide, human trafficking, slavery, and systemic cruelty to children” to perpetuate “harm so grave that it would be inconsistent with the goals and principles of the University,”

Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will examine its assets for investments in the aforementioned companies,

Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will make information about all of its assets public, pertaining especially to its investment managers and the funds that they operate, as well as a list of institutional holdings,

Be it further resolved, that Cornell University will end any corporate partnerships with the aforementioned companies,

Be it finally resolved, Cornell University will establish a comprehensive ban on any research and development of technologies used by the Israeli armed forces at the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute at Cornell Tech.

Respectfully Submitted,

Name 'XX

Position, Student Assembly