



October 23, 2023

Assalamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh.

The Muslim Students Association of the University of British Columbia (MSA UBC) stands in unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people amidst the death, destruction, and ethnic cleansing they face in Gaza at the hands of the illegal, settler-colonial, apartheid occupation. Our hearts are with the thousands of innocent men, women, and children, irrespective of their beliefs, who have suffered unthinkable tragedy. MSA UBC extends its support to the Palestinian people, offering solace and support in the face of enduring the injustices that have afflicted their homeland for decades.

As Muslim students committed to justice for all, and in accordance with the guidance of Allah and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), we firmly uphold the principle that causing harm to innocent people is unequivocally unjust, irrespective of their nationality, ethnicity, or faith.

With that being said, far too many universities, **including our own**, have rejected this principle by failing to condemn the violent brutalization, murder, and oppression of innocent Palestinians in Gaza, while at the same time **only** condemning the tragic violent attacks on Israeli individuals. We, on the other hand, reiterate our principled commitment to opposing violence against the innocent and stand in support of the Palestinian people's right to life, justice, and a free, unoccupied home.

On October 11, 2023, UBC Interim President Deborah Buszard issued a statement titled “Supporting the UBC Community”, that refers to “the atrocities from the terrorist attacks on Israel” but remains silent regarding the ongoing state terror committed by the Israeli Occupation against Palestinians. At the time of this statement’s release, the Israeli Occupation has murdered more than 4000 Palestinians, including at least 1700 children in the span of just over 2 weeks. Interim President Buszard’s choice to turn a blind eye to the plight of the Palestinian people and furthermore, to ignore their existence by omitting any reference to Palestine or Palestinians, but to instead refer to “Israel, Gaza and elsewhere”, dehumanizes Palestinians and denies them the fundamental right to safety. It is also important to note that it is this same dehumanization and rhetoric that often motivates extremists to act violently against Muslims and Palestinians, as was the case on October 15, 2023, when Joseph Czuba, a 71-year-old man expressing anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian views, stabbed 6-year-old Muslim child, Wadea Al-Fayoume, to death and injured his mother after breaking into their home in Chicago. Furthermore, due to this rhetoric and dehumanization of Palestinians and Muslims by western media and institutions such as UBC, MSA UBC has noted a significant increase in Islamophobia on campus – something which we plan to thoroughly investigate.

Our worldview, Islam, commands us to unequivocally stand for justice. MSA UBC encourages the Muslim student community to actively advocate for a free Palestine. We also implore our fellow students to raise awareness about the injustices stemming from the Illegal Occupation and to firmly oppose any attempts that seek to justify or endorse the oppressive actions of the Israeli apartheid government.

We encourage members of the Muslim community to engage in the following collective efforts:

Dua (Supplication & Prayer)

We implore you to recognize the profound significance of supplication and prayer in our faith. As Muslims, our unwavering belief in Allah as the All-Hearing and the All-Merciful compels us to remember the people of Palestine in our prayers. MSA UBC urges individuals and communities to include Palestine in their supplications, acknowledging the transformative power of collective prayer.

Education

We advocate for a concerted effort towards gaining a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary situation in Palestine, as well as the historical context that informs it. Commit to delving into the Islamic significance of Al-Aqsa and Palestine, as this knowledge is foundational to our shared identity. Recognize that this transcends ethnicities, languages, and places of birth, uniting us under a common Islamic concern.

Raise Your Voice

Act as an informed and responsible source of information on the ongoing and decades-long struggles in Palestine. Be the authentic voice that the world needs to hear and witness. MSA UBC encourages individuals to share information on social media platforms, emphasizing the importance of using verified and credible sources to disseminate accurate information. In doing so, we collectively combat misinformation and foster a deeper understanding of this complex issue.

Jumu'ah Khutbah (Sermons)

MSA UBC calls upon mosques and Islamic organizations to utilize Friday sermons (Jumu'ah Khutbah) as a platform to educate congregants about the unjust treatment of Palestinians. Addressing these concerns in religious gatherings not only raises awareness but also motivates community members to take action.

Contribute to Relief Efforts

Financial support plays a pivotal role in sustaining humanitarian organizations committed to providing aid and relief to Palestinians on the ground. MSA UBC encourages both individuals and organizations to contribute to reputable charities and relief efforts dedicated to supporting the people of Palestine.

Sincerely,

Muslim Students' Association of the University of British Columbia