

Open Letter Supporting FSU Students and Their Protected Political Speech Supporting Palestinian Human Rights

We, the undersigned, unequivocally support the call for justice by Palestine Legal and CAIR-Florida regarding the failure of Florida State University (FSU) to support students Ahmad Daraldik and Jack Fox Keen. We endorse the civil rights groups' [letter to FSU President John Thrasher](#) addressing the serious issues of attacking advocacy for Palestinian human rights on the public university's campus. This attack is a violation of our constitutionally protected rights of freedom of speech and protest.

There is a constant political dissonance surrounding the Israeli occupation of Palestine and we recognize the Palestinian people's call for self-determination and justice for over 70 years of human rights violations. We recognize the need for Palestinians and allies to voice their distress concerning this occupation, particularly in the United States where so much power is held to end the atrocities. We support Ahmad in his right to voice his opinion and share his lived experiences. Not only has Ahmad had to face the physical and mental trauma of living under Israeli occupation, especially as a young child, but now he is being punished and smeared for merely speaking on his personal experiences as a Palestinian.

Conflating criticism of Israel with antisemitism is illogical and erroneous. Punishing people for speaking against human rights violations caused by a foreign country is unfathomable, especially when there is no legal punishment for speaking against the human rights violations caused by the United States government itself. No government or power structure should be protected from criticism, since their actions blatantly are affecting people's lives, comfort, and rights. The call for justice and human rights for all stands above any government entity. We support Jack in their critique of the student resolution seeking to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance ("IHRA") Working Definition of Antisemitism as it conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Holding a government accountable for *their* discriminatory actions is not the same as nor in anyway equivalent to discriminating against the Jewish people.

We join Palestine Legal and CAIR-Florida in the demand for President Thrasher to immediately apologize to Ahmad and Jack, rescind FSU's adoption of the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, and cease investigating FSU students for the protected political speech supporting Palestinian rights.

Signatures removed for privacy and safety.