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## To Our Fellow Members and Our Union,

We, the undersigned graduate workers from schools and departments across New York University heed the call of Palestinian trade unions and other members of Palestinian society to boycott, divest from, and sanction the state of Israel. We ask our union and fellow members to stand in solidarity with Palestinian workers. To that end, we call on GSOC-Local 2110 to hold a referendum on the issue of joining the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

We urge the elected representatives of our union to stand alongside oppressed workers in Palestine, as other student and teacher unions from around the world have done in voting to boycott, divest and sanction Israel. We believe that as a union it is our duty to support Palestinians in their struggle for justice against the Israeli occupation that violates their human and civil rights, and systematically exploits their labor. And as teaching assistants, researchers, and student-workers, we must learn and teach others about the pressing global struggles of our time.

Since its creation, the State of Israel has brutally suppressed Palestinian demands for self-determination, and to this day it enforces an apartheid system, illegally privileging one ethnic group over another. In 1948, Zionist militias established a Jewish-only state and made 750,000 indigenous Palestinians refugees in the process.[1]

(file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn1) Today, there are some five million Palestinian refugees recognized by UNWRA, many living in refugee camps for over 60 years.[2]

(file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn2) Though the rights of Palestinian refugees, including the right of return, have been recognized by international law and stated in UN resolution 194, Israel's policies consistently violate these rights and refuse to acknowledge them.[3]

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The Palestinians who remained in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after this expulsion came under Israeli military occupation in 1967. Since then, Israel has implanted hundreds of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and unilaterally annexed East Jerusalem, in complete violation of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.[4]

(file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn4) This occupation and settlement project has created a racial stratification of Jews and Palestinians living in these territories. Whereas Israeli Jews are governed by civil law, Palestinians are ruled by Israeli military law and are not granted the same civil rights. Furthermore, Israel has constructed a separation wall, built on Palestinian confiscated lands, restricting Palestinian freedom of movement. The International Court of Justice has ruled that this wall is in violation of international law, but the state of Israel has paid no attention.[5]

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At the same time, Israel has turned the impoverished and densely-populated Gaza strip into the world's largest open-air prison and launched repeated military assaults against it.[6]

(file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn6) The latest Israeli offensive against Gaza in the summer of 2014 killed more than 2,100 Palestinians, the great majority of them civilians and a quarter of them children.[7]

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The Palestinians that remained inside the territory that became Israel in 1948 became Israeli citizens, and today make up 20% of the total Israeli population.[8] (file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn8) Despite their citizenship, Palestinians are subject to over 50 discriminatory laws that restrict their political participation, access to land, education, state budget resources, and criminal procedures.[9]

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The Palestinian Civil Society, as well as all major Palestinian trade unions, have issued a call for the citizens of the world (<http://www.bdsmovement.net/call>) to boycott, divest from, and sanction the State of Israel, until it respects the rights of Palestinian refugees, ends the military occupation and dismantles the wall, and recognizes the rights of Palestinian citizens to full equality.

Across the country, and right here at NYU, there are voices speaking out against these injustices and calling for support of the BDS movement. [10] (file:///C:/Users/eeg284/Downloads/GSOC%20letter%20for%20BDS\_draft\_Eman%20Edits.docx#\_ftn10) We echo NYU Out of Occupied Palestine's call (<http://www.nooccupiedpalestine.org/text-of-statement.html>) for NYU to divest from companies that profit from the violence and oppression of Palestinians and urge our representatives in GSOC-UAW 2110 to amplify this call and stand in solidarity with Palestinian workers by officially endorsing BDS.

We therefore call on GSOC-UAW 2110 to hold a referendum on the issue of joining the global movement for Boycott, Divestment and

Sanctions, until Israel complies with international law and respects the rights of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and all Palestinian refugees and exiles in two ways:

1. Calling on NSOC and UAW to divest their investments, including pension funds, from Israeli state institutions and international companies complicit in severe and ongoing human rights violations as part of the Israeli oppression of the Palestinian people.
2. Calling on NYU and the UAW International to decline to conduct business with said institutions and companies.

Sign Here

The undersigned,

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