



Canadian Union of Public Employees • Local 1281

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RE: CUPE 1281 demands disclosure and immediate cessation of U of T's investment in Israeli apartheid

Dear President Meric Gertler,

CUPE 1281 represents support staff for social justice-oriented organizations across Ontario and Canada, including several CUPE Ontario Locals, the Canadian Media Guild, the Carleton and Toronto Metropolitan University's Student Unions, and Community Food Centers Canada. We are known for our active presence within CUPE Ontario and CUPE National, and for our long history of working in alignment with broader social justice movements. We stand together with those working to dismantle labour exploitation, ableism, racism, gender-based oppression, homophobia, and colonialism, including people who have and are mobilizing for justice for Palestine.

This is why we are writing today to express our solidarity with the protestors participating in the encampment at the University of Toronto, and their call on the University to immediately divest from Israeli apartheid. We echo the encampment, and demand the University comply with the following requests:

1. Disclose all investments
2. Divest from Israeli apartheid
3. End partnerships with complicit Institutions

One of the University's roles is to help develop young minds so that they may contribute to the advancement of society. Students participating in the encampment are doing just this; they are participating in democratic and peaceful politics by exercising their rights to lawful demonstration as political subjects. Towards the advancement of society, we support students calling for the University to stand against genocidal violence against children and civilians in Gaza.

As the home of many world-leading research institutions, the University has an obligation to stand against the widely condemned Israeli violence in Gaza. And our members, who work to support CUPE 3902, echo the call to protect union members on campus and their rights to freedom of expression and assembly.

Moreover, we understand the University is concerned with issues like biowaste at the encampments. Until such time that the University commits to divestment, we call on the University to provide students participating in the encampment with portable bathrooms, fresh water, and medical resources.

Our concerns for students' health and safety are heightened by the presence of armed officers at the encampment. Our heightened concerns are reasonable in light of the numerous reports and video evidence of police-initiated violence against peaceful protests at earlier Toronto demonstrations against Israel's genocidal and unlawful violence against civilians in Gaza.

We will, with many other communities and organizations who believe in an equitable future, watch with interest to see what the University administration deems to be actions aligned with the advancement of society and our collective futures.

In solidarity,

Linda Barnett Coelho, President
The Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1281