

ICYMI: 150+ OXFORD UNI PROTESTORS FOR GAZA FLOOD GATES OF VICE CHANCELLOR CEREMONY; STAFF DELIVER DEMANDS TO VICE CHANCELLOR AT RECEPTION

Amid the Israeli assault on Rafah, OxAct4Pal Mounts More Pressure on Oxford Administration

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8 May 2024; OXFORD, UK – On Wednesday afternoon, over two hundred members of the University of Oxford community staged an emergency rally on Wednesday afternoon in front of the Sheldonian Theatre, disrupting the Vice Chancellor's Award Showcase. The action, titled "EMERGENCY RALLY: ALL OUT FOR RAFAH", was called by the newly-formed Oxford Action for Palestine Coalition. The coalition comprises students, faculty, and staff that established a 'Liberated Zone' encampment in front of Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum on Monday morning.

The VC Awards Showcase Participants in the rally rallied in front of the Sheldonian Theatre holding a banner of the OA4P's demands of the University Administration – which are also listed at the bottom of this release. Participant splattered their hands with red paint; they held their hands up and chanted, "*Blood on your hands! Blood on your hands!*" as the ceremony began.

In a statement explaining the rally, OA4P emphasised Israel's escalating assault on Rafah, urging the University to take immediate action to end its enabling of the ongoing Israeli genocide, occupation, and apartheid in Gaza and across Palestine.

QUOTE: *"This morning Israel intensified its assault on Rafah, carpet bombing and cutting off resources to an area where half of Gaza's population is sheltering after violent displacement. There should be no business as usual during a genocide – and we refuse to watch VC Tracey hold a celebration in gilded halls while the University has blood on its hands. We escalate for Gaza, and we urge the Administration to act on our demands immediately.*

Following the action, the Vice Chancellor attended a drinks reception at the Examination Schools. Two of the university staff present hand-delivered OxAct4Pal's demands to VC Irene Tracey in the middle of the reception, voicing their wholehearted support for the OA4P effort.

The successful event comes at the heels of a busy three days for OA4P action in Oxford. International spotlight and University community support have skyrocketed since the encampment went up on Monday morning. The "Liberated Zone" has now swelled to over sixty campers staying overnight, with over four hundred members of the University community participating in encampment programming throughout the three days. Yesterday, over 370 faculty (and counting) issued a statement of support for OA4P's encampment and its demands.

For photos and video of the rally in our PRESS PACKET, as well as a link to the faculty statement of support, visit our linktree linktr.ee/OxAct4Pal.

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DEMANDS: Oxford Action for Palestine (OA4P) calls on the University of Oxford to...

1. DISCLOSE UNIVERSITY-WIDE ASSETS

1.1 Annually disclose a comprehensive account of University-wide assets, including direct and indirect investments, land holdings, donations, and grants.

2. DIVEST UNIVERSITY-WIDE ASSETS

2.1 Immediately divest University-wide direct and indirect holdings in all arms companies.

2.2 Publicly pledge to completely divest University-wide direct and indirect holdings in all companies that are complicit in Israeli genocide, apartheid, and occupation of Palestine within the next 5 years.

3. OVERHAUL INVESTMENT POLICY

3.1 Expand the ethical restriction on arms manufacturers to cover direct and indirect investments in all arms and military technology companies.

3.2 Add an ethical restriction to the Investment Policy on direct and indirect investments in companies that are complicit in Israeli genocide, apartheid, and occupation.

3.3 Integrate community stakeholders in ethical investment review processes to ensure that all investment decisions adhere to justice-based guidelines.

4. BOYCOTT INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

4.1 End all institutional relationships with Israeli universities, including exchange programmes, joint projects, conferences and other official links.

4.2 Pledge not to enter into future institutional relationships with Israeli universities as long as Israeli genocide, apartheid, or occupation is ongoing.

4.3 End research, career, and procurement partnerships with companies and institutions that are complicit in Israeli genocide, apartheid, or occupation.

5. DROP BARCLAYS

5.1. In light of Barclays bank's extensive investments in companies supplying Israel with weapons and military technology, the University of Oxford and its Subsidiaries must stop banking with Barclays.

6. REBUILD AND REINVEST

6.1 Publicly commit to supporting, through financial and material means, the Palestinian-led rebuilding of the twelve universities that have been completely, or in part, destroyed by Israeli aggression in the last year.

6.2 Establish and support a long-term task force composed of staff, students, and relevant Palestinian community members who will recommend how best to meet the call issued by Palestinian higher education institutions to rebuild the higher education sector in Gaza.

6.3 Publicly commit to allocating resources in the interim to support scholars at risk in Palestine through, but not limited to, exchanges, joint projects, academic fellowships and partnerships, and scholarship programmes.

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