

## UoE Staff Statement in Support of Divestment

We, members of staff of the University of Edinburgh, express our support for the Gaza solidarity encampment established by our students at Old College on the 5th of May. In particular, we support their demand that our university immediately divests from any company directly involved and complicit with the dispossession of Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation; as well as from what the International Court of Justice, the highest United Nations judicial body, has acknowledged as prima facie plausible acts of genocide perpetrated by Israel against Palestinians as a national group.

The devastation in Gaza is catastrophic and Israel has announced plans to invade Rafah, where more than 1.5 million Palestinians are sheltering after they were expelled from other areas of Gaza. Their homes, hospitals, fertility clinics, mosques, churches, bakeries, archives, and other essential infrastructure necessary for life and society to exist have been targeted and destroyed. University staff and students in Gaza have paid a terrifying price. [Every one of Gaza's universities](#) has been destroyed or damaged; 3 university presidents, at least 100 academics and thousands of students have been killed, many targeted for assassination with their entire families. This is an unprecedented intensification of a long pattern of scholasticide enacted by Israel over decades through systematic attacks against Palestinian education.

As staff of an institution which has a direct historical legacy of colonial dispossession in Palestine—through the role that our former Chancellor Arthur James Balfour played in 1917 with his declaration on Palestine, which institutionalised the denial of the right to national self-determination for Palestinians thus enabling their ongoing displacement, dispossession and colonial subjugation—we urge our leadership not to repeat the mistakes of our past Chancellor and other institutional figures which have entangled our university to a legacy of colonial and imperial dispossession and slavery. We thus stand with our students who today urge our leadership to stop all investments in companies complicit with Israel's regime of [apartheid](#) and plausible genocide, abiding by the principles of due diligence and the key reparative justice principal of cessation of harm/non-repetition.

In [our responsible divestment policies](#) we make clear that we abide by UN standards and values—proudly [claiming](#) our high Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI) scores, largely based on UN standards. Further, our Sustainability and Social Responsibility Policy states clearly that we will “promote, protect and respect human rights through everything that we do.” We must make no exceptions for Palestine. We thus call on university leadership to immediately abide by the highest United Nations judicial body (ICJ) and its orders and terminate all investments that are complicit with acts of dispossession and destruction of Palestinians as a national group. And we call on university leadership to re-invest any profits that were made from our investments in or through complicit companies to support the reconstruction of the destroyed higher educational sector in Gaza and support Palestinian students.

**We urge our leadership to take immediate emergency measures and stop any use of university funds for un-ethical investments which violate international law, human rights and the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (in Palestine and elsewhere).**