

SSMU Student-Initiated Referendum Question Fall 2023

Ballot Question: "Do you agree to the SSMU's adoption of the Policy Against Genocide in Palestine?"

Policy Against Genocide in Palestine

Why is this policy so urgent?

- ❖ Since October 7th 2023, Israeli forces have waged a relentless, [indiscriminate](#), [genocidal](#) bombing campaign in the Gaza Strip, murdering over 7,500 Palestinians, including over 3,000 children and 47 entire extended families at the time of writing. Backed by the Canadian, U.S. and other Western governments, Israeli military and government officials have repeatedly declared their [intent to destroy](#) the population of Gaza.
- ❖ Since October 7th, food, water, medicine, fuel, electricity and any other essentials of life have been completely cut off from the Gaza Strip by Israeli forces. This constitutes a murderous escalation of the pre-existing, illegal, suffocating, siege which has subjected Gaza's population to [inhumane](#) living conditions over the past 17 years.
- ❖ As of October 28th, healthcare facilities throughout Gaza have completely [collapsed](#) as a result of the bombing and the siege. Internet and phone communications have been completely [blocked](#). The people of Gaza are facing the threat of imminent annihilation, under the shadow of a media blackout.
- ❖ Instead of condemning this escalating genocide, the McGill administration has [publicly threatened](#) students who voice their solidarity with the Palestinian people. The administration's persistent refusal to even acknowledge the mass murder of Palestinians has demonstrated a shocking, blatant, racist disregard for Palestinian and Arab lives.

- ❖ McGill University continues to [invest](#), or engage in close collaboration with corporations, institutions, and [donors](#) complicit in the ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, in addition to settler-colonial apartheid and ethnic cleansing throughout occupied Palestine.
- ❖ Following concerted student activism, McGill University cut its ties with institutions and corporations [complicit](#) in South African apartheid in the 1980s.
- ❖ The SSMU [Constitution](#) states that “the SSMU commits to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights [and] social justice.”
- ❖ In 2021, the SSMU Judicial Board [reaffirmed](#) the SSMU’s right to support Palestinian liberation, to criticize oppressive governments, and to [engage](#) in boycott or divestment campaigns.
- ❖ During the SSMU’s Winter 2022 Referendum, 71% of student voters endorsed the Palestine Solidarity Policy, indicating overwhelming support for our student union’s urgent obligation to support Palestinian human rights.

Call to Action

Be it resolved, that the students of McGill University and their student union:

1. Demand that our university’s administration immediately and publicly condemn the genocidal bombing campaigns and siege against the people of Gaza, retract its abhorrent threats against Palestinian students and student groups, and provide concrete support to Palestinian and Arab students.
2. Demand that our University immediately cut ties with any corporations, institutions or individuals complicit in genocide, settler-colonialism, apartheid, or ethnic cleansing against Palestinians.
3. Demand that our University immediately divest from all corporations and institutions complicit in genocide, settler-colonialism, apartheid, or ethnic cleansing against Palestinians.

4. Demand that our student union, the SSMU, make an immediate public statement condemning the ongoing genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, and reaffirming its solidarity with Palestinian and Arab students.
5. Demand that our student union commit to a strong, consistent position in solidarity with Palestinian students, and with the Palestinian struggle against genocide and settler-colonial apartheid.

This Policy shall remain in force for a period of 5 years until May 1st, 2028.