

MOTION REGARDING STRIKE FOR DIVESTMENT FROM GENOCIDE 2025-09-29

Submitted for: 2025-09-29

Submitted to: SSMU General Assembly

Document no.: GA-PUB-MOT-2025-09-29-001

Moved by: Sumayya Kheireddine

Current Status:

- ☐ FOR APPROVAL
- ☒ **APPROVED**
- ☐ POSTPONED
- ☐ COMMITTED
- ☐ NOT APPROVED

Seconded by: Amrit Duggal

Issue

The current motion addresses a one-day solidarity strike at McGill University in support of divestment from weapons manufacturers implicated in the Israeli genocide in Palestine. Prompted by two years of ongoing genocide in Palestine, McGill students demand university divestment from corporations supporting military activity in Gaza, an end to institutional relationships with complicit entities.

Background and Rationale

The proposed motion follows substantial student mobilization against McGill's investments in companies linked to military actions in Gaza, including but not limited to Lockheed Martin, Airbus, Textron, BAE Systems, Safran, and Thales. Recent student protests, referendums, and policy support demonstrate a widespread desire for McGill to divest from these companies and sever ties with entities accused of supporting human rights violations. This motion aligns with historical instances of ethical divestment, as demonstrated in the fossil fuel divestment of 2023. Additionally, the motion responds to increased security measures and police presence on campus, which students argue contravene their rights to protest and organize.

From SSMU Policy on Harmful Military Technology (2024-2029)

The existing Policy on Harmful Military Technology, which requires that SSMU “advocate for the cessation of harmful military research, the interests of harmful military technology organizations at McGill University, or any other connection to the military-industrial complex” (7), explicitly identifies McGill’s investments in Airbus, Safran, Lockheed Martin, Thales, and BAE Systems as arms-producing and military service companies from which McGill must divest (11). This motion fulfills this call by demanding that McGill divest from these same companies, as well as others whose revenues are derived in part from Israel’s war on Gaza.

*From SSMU **Divest for Human Rights Policy** (2021-2026)*

Motion is consistent with the responsibility of the Offices of the President, Vice-President (External Affairs), and Vice-President (University Affairs) to advocate for McGill University to divest from, refrain from investing in, or terminate any other relationships with companies or other institutions engaged in ongoing human rights violations. Incl ReMax, OshKosh Corporation, etc.

*From SSMU **Policy Against Genocide in Palestine** (2025-2028)*

Motion is consistent with the existing Policy Against Genocide in Palestine, which requires the SSMU to demand that “McGill University immediately cut ties with any corporations, institutions or individuals complicit in genocide, settler-colonialism, apartheid, or ethnic cleansing against Palestinians”.

Alignment with Mission

This motion aligns with the former policies of the SSMU. Namely, the Divest for Human Rights Policy, Policy Against Genocide in Palestine, and Harmful Military Technology Policy. It seeks to leverage student democracy as facilitated through a strike vote in advocating for divestment and student activism, promoting a safe and inclusive environment that honors freedom of expression and ethical commitments.

Consultations Completed

Consultations occurred with SSMU President Dymetri Taylor, SSMU Internal Counsel, as well as members of the SSMU’s political campaigns coordinators under the External Affairs portfolio.

Members of the committee for the “Strike for Palestinian Liberation” were also consulted on the process of submitting a strike motion, and on some of

the legal considerations involved in drafting the “Strike for Palestinian Liberation.” Where possible, this motion attempts to mirror the language of the “Strike for Palestinian Liberation” with the hope of easing burdens on the legal review process.

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

Risk factors include not promoting urgently needed popular mobilization against companies complicit in war crimes and or ethnic cleansing per the ICC, IJC, and the majority of human rights organizations.

As elaborated in Appendix A, SSMU should inform students of their rights to demonstration, and should take measures to de-escalate violence from police and security.

In the event of concerns surrounding actions or protests including pickets, by students during the strike, this motion does not endorse any activity which is not explicitly associated in this document with the strike. do not fall under the purview or responsibility of the SSMU and its constituents. The SSMU supports the right to protest as defined under Canadian and Quebec law.

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If approved at the General Assembly, the resolved motion shall proceed to an online ratification process with a quorum of no less than 10% of the SSMU’s constituent body. The voting form should be sent out no later than the following day in an email communication to members. The online voting period shall be open for at least 72 hours. Ratification shall be deemed successful if the motion receives a simple majority vote, with participation from no less than 10% of the SSMU’s constituent body. Following the ratification vote, the Motion needs to be ratified by the Board of Directors

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that the SSMU student body adopt the strike policy in Appendix A for a one-day strike to take place on Oct 7, 2025.

Association étudiante de l'Université McGill
Students' Society of McGill University

*Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.*

(514) 398-6800 | ssmu.ca | 3501 rue Peel, Montréal, QC, H3A 1W7



After the General Assembly, be it resolved that the Board of Directors convene at the earliest possible date for an emergency meeting to ratify the implementation of the motion, pending the results of the online ratification by the student body.

Results of the Vote	In favour	(544)
	Opposed	(13)
	Abstain	(5)

Appendix A: Strike for Divestment from Genocide

(October 7th, 2025)

Table of Contents

Preamble	5
Background	6
Precedent for Divestment at McGill	6
Through student Democracy	7
Why a strike?	7
SSMU's Role	8
Call to Strike	8

Preamble

The students of McGill University are calling for a one-day strike on October 7th, 2025. This call to action comes as a response to two years of genocide in Gaza.

Since October 7th, 2023, McGill students have protested in historic numbers against McGill's financial investments in companies that profit from Israel's ongoing war on Gaza, and after two years, McGill has failed to respond to this simple student demand. **These companies include, but are not limited to, Lockheed Martin, Airbus, Textron, BAE Systems, Safran, and Thales.**

In light of these circumstances, we call on all students of conscience to strike on October 7th to reiterate our demands and commitment to divestment, and in recognition of the steadfastness and resilience of the Palestinian people after over two years of genocide. Echoing the [Harmful Military Technology Policy](#), the [Divest for Human Rights Policy](#), and the [Policy against Genocide in](#)

Association étudiante de l'Université McGill
Students' Society of McGill University

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

(514) 398-6800 | ssmu.ca | 3501 rue Peel, Montréal, QC, H3A 1W7



[Palestine](#), we demand that our university divest its equity holdings in all companies involved in the production and sale of weapons and military technology linked to genocide and occupation.

Background

McGill invests almost 15 million dollars of its [endowment fund](#) in companies that are linked to upholding Israel's war on Gaza. [Notable targets](#) include weapons and military technology manufacturers Lockheed Martin (\$549,800), Airbus Aerospace (\$982, 365), Thales Group (\$1,446,436), Bae Systems PLC (\$2,459,414), Safran Group (\$1,501,182), and Textron Inc (\$1,106, 513). As an example of the heinous impact of these companies, Lockheed Martin manufactures the Hellfire 9X missile which is sold to the IDF and used in Gaza, notably at the [Al Shifa](#) Hospital Massacre.

The situation in Gaza is reaching a crisis point. Over 64,000 Palestinians and over 19,000 children have been killed by Israel's devastating assault on the Gaza Strip since October 7th 2023. These are conservative [estimates](#) by the Gaza Ministry of Health. Including factors like [imposed famine and lack of medical resources](#), journals like The Lancet estimate the current number of murdered Palestinians to be closer to 186,000. This report is also dated and likely to be significantly higher. In the last several months, the Israeli military has escalated its aggression through engineered [famine](#) and massacres at aid sites operated by US mercenaries. Since September 1st, Gaza City has been subjected to the relentless bombing of buildings, hospitals, and tents, as well as demolitions of entire residential blocks. These escalations are cited as preparation for a ground invasion, following the [Israeli Security Cabinet's](#) order to displace Gaza City's over one million residents by October 7th, 2025.

Precedent for Divestment at McGill

Within the McGill Administration:

McGill University [divested](#) from Apartheid South Africa in the 1980s. After similar activism, McGill also committed to [divestment](#) from fossil fuels in 2023. It is evident that divestment is achievable with protracted student action.

Within the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU):

In May 2024, the SSMU ratified the Policy on [Harmful](#) Military Technology, which affirms in articles 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, respectively, an institutional mandate to support student campaigns advocating against military technology as well as to advocate against any policy of police on campus. There is precedent for these demands in SSMU's existing Moratorium on considering Referendum questions for Ancillary Fees until McGill divests from its investments in companies whose business includes harmful

Association étudiante de l'Université McGill
Students' Society of McGill University

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

(514) 398-6800 | ssmu.ca | 3501 rue Peel, Montréal, QC, H3A 1W7



military technology. SSMU is upholding its [constitution](#) by “[committing] to demonstrating leadership in matters of human rights [and] social justice.”

Through student Democracy

In the Fall 2023 semester, students voted to approve the [Policy](#) Against Genocide in Palestine (PAGIP). This policy was subsequently affirmed by the [Court of Appeal](#).

In April 2025, the SSMU’s constituents [democratically adopted](#) the [motion](#) regarding the Strike in Support of Palestinian Liberation from April 2-4, 2025.

Taken together, these policies and votes demonstrate that the student population at McGill supports divestment.

Why a strike?

- The SSMU Constitution¹ and the SSMU’s Internal Regulations of Governance² uphold the right of students to call a mass strike. The right to strike is also enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.
- There is a long and powerful history of student strikes in Montreal. Notably, the 2012 student strikes over tuition fee raises led to the participation of over 310,000 students throughout Quebec. Recent short-term [student strikes](#) took place within McGill faculties in 2015, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2023, and most recently in April 2025.
- A student strike is a powerful political tool that is often used to bring awareness and support for a broader movement when normal institutional avenues are not available or effective. However, a student strike does not create material pressure for the university in the same way as the employer-employee relationship of a labor strike. For this reason, student strikes (unlike

¹ 13.7. Strike General Assembly

A Special General Assembly may be called to consider business related to a Society strike. Quorum for a resolution to put the Society on strike shall be five hundred (500) Members of the Society.

² 9. Strike General Assembly

9.1. Definition: A Strike General Assembly shall be any General Assembly considering a motion to strike.

9.2. Quorum: The quorum of Strike General Assemblies shall be 500 members. The quorum for a Strike General Assembly applies only to the motion to strike and not to any other agenda items.

Association étudiante de l'Université McGill
Students' Society of McGill University

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
Located on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, traditional territories.

(514) 398-6800 | ssmu.ca | 3501 rue Peel, Montréal, QC, H3A 1W7



labor strikes) are often limited in duration, symbolic in intention, and serve as narrative interventions within a larger political campaign.

SSMU's Role

- SSMU shall communicate, through email and through its social media accounts, the strike information, its intent, and its demands to all members, and will provide information on the right to strike.
- SSMU shall disseminate, through email, the strike information, its intent, and its demands to all faculty and departmental student associations.
- SSMU shall communicate the strike information, its intent, and its demands to the McGill administration.

Call to Strike

For the reasons outlined above, we call on a mass student strike for the period of one school day on October 7th, 2025 with the following demands from students:

1. Demand that our university divest its equity holdings in all companies involved in the production and sale of weapons and military technology linked to genocide and occupation in Palestine. These companies include, but are not limited to, Lockheed Martin, Airbus, Textron, BAE Systems, Safran, and Thales.
2. Demand the immediate end of any research partnership or financial relationship between McGill and said companies.
3. Demand that our university immediately cease any disciplinary cases and political tribunals against students involved in popular organizing, political advocacy, and demonstrations, and provide amnesty to all students who engage in similar protests going forward.