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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by International Association of Justice Watch, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[19 August 2024]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Arbitrary Detention of Pro-Palestine Students in the United States of America

Across the United States of America, pro-Palestine students have faced repression, suspension, and arrest. Several institutions have cracked down on pro-Palestinian protests and encampments. At nearly 20 universities, police moved in and detained protesters, leading to more than 1500 arrests so far. On April 17, students at Columbia University formed a “Gaza Solidarity Encampment” on the campus’s East Butler Lawn, calling for the school to divest from companies that profit from the occupation in the State of Palestine. Their tents stood for two days before the administration suspended more than 100 participating students and asked the NYPD to dismantle the encampment. Unsurprisingly, the repression only increased the size and scope of the protest.

The Number of Arbitrary Detentions in Universities

Columbia University: The elite private university in New York City has called in police twice in two weeks to respond to pro-Palestine student protesters calling for Columbia to divest from Israeli companies and cut ties with Israeli institutions. A group of students had set up tents on one of the university's lawns early on April 17 to form what they called a “Gaza Solidarity Encampment.” Barnard, a women's college in Columbia, has also participated in the protest. After police cleared the camp and arrested more than 100 people, a new encampment maintained a physical presence on campus while facing threats of intervention by the National Guard and claims of anti-Semitism.

Yale University: At Yale, in New Haven, Connecticut, police arrested 60 people, including 47 students, early on April 22 after university president Peter Salovey cited “harmful acts and threatening language used against individuals at or near the protest sites.” The arrests came more than a week after a group of graduate students began a hunger strike to pressure the famed Ivy League school to divest from companies arming and equipping occupying power.

New York University: 133 protesters were taken into custody on disorderly conduct charges late on April 22 after a protest camp was set up on the plaza in front of New York University's business school. An NYU spokesman said the demonstration was held without notice or authorization. The state university called police to clear the demonstration after additional protesters, many not affiliated with NYU, joined in. Campus authorities boarded up the plaza with plywood, and students started another tent camp at another plaza on April 26. The universities warned that participants would be disciplined.

Arbitrary arrest of pro-Palestinian students is a clear violation of human rights documents as follows:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 9: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.”
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 9, Section 1: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.”

We ask you to take immediate measures to release the detained students. We also expect you to guarantee pro-Palestinian protesters in the United States of America the right to freedom without fear of arbitrary arrest by the police.