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## ‘Solidarity ask from UAW 2710 against the repression of protests’

By a guest author posted on April 25, 2024

On April 18, Minouche Shafik, the president of Columbia, violated university procedures and authorized the New York Police Department to arrest dozens of Columbia students, including members of Student Workers of Columbia – SWC-UAW 2710. The protesting students and student workers had bravely held the Gaza Solidarity Encampment on the lawn in the center of campus for two days, joined by hundreds of student and SWC picketers protecting their encampment and a mass mobilization of other labor organizers and the community on the streets outside the campus.



UAW Labor for Palestine members march for Palestine, Brooklyn, New York, Dec. 9, 2023. Credit: UAW Labor for Palestine.

The encampment’s demands included that Columbia, their school and employer, divest its financial holdings from weapons manufacturers, tech companies and any other entities that materially benefit from the Israeli occupation and genocide of Palestinians, that Columbia make its investments transparent and that Columbia reinstate all students facing academic discipline for pro-Palestine protests over the past few months, including five students who were suspended and evicted from their Columbia-owned housing two weeks ago.



As workers, we stand in solidarity with our union siblings in SWC-UAW 2710 who were arrested and face suspension. We call for their and their classmates' immediate reinstatement and for Columbia to drop all charges against them, both legal and academic. We deplore President Shafik's actions and call for Columbia to immediately end the repression of protest.

We, the undersigned, believe the repression and criminalization of activists, students, professors and academic workers across the country are violations of our elementary rights to free speech and protest. If left unchecked, these attacks on academic freedom and protest against genocide will pave the way for further measures that constrain civil liberties, not only for those in universities, but for civil society at large.

The right to protest is necessary for every struggle, and the direct attack on this right is an attack on labor as well. An injury to one is an injury to all. If the Columbia students can be repressed for protesting, Columbia workers and all workers could be too. Workers stand in full solidarity with this student movement.

Solidarity forever!

Signed,

SWC-UAW 2710, UAW Region 9A, ALAA UAW Local 2325, CURA Collective, CPW-UAW 4100, GSOC-UAW 2110, Graduate Employees' Organization – University of Michigan – GEO 3550 AFL-CIO, Downstate NY Starbucks Workers United, Sinai Student Workers (SSW-UAW), UAW 4811 Santa Cruz, She Wolf Workers Union – RWDSU, SENS UAW (Academic Student Workers at The New School), HGSU-UAW 5118, UNC Workers Union – UE150, GEO-Graduate Employees' Organization at UIUC, UE 197 Teachers and Researchers United – Graduate workers at Johns Hopkins University, United Legal Educators – UAW, United Library Workers USW Local 9562, UAW Local 4811, UAW Local 2322, Association of Legislative Employees, Mother Jones Staff Union, SWCD (Student Workers Collective at Dartmouth), NYC Alamo United – UAW 2179, Concordia Research and Education Workers (CREW) Union, Rutgers AAUP – AFT, UAW Labor for Palestine, Irvine Faculty Association, Santa Cruz Faculty Association, Executive Board of PTL AAUP – AFT (Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union), Rank and File Action (PSC – CUNY), UC Divest Coalition UCSC, UCLA Faculty for Justice in Palestine, CGSU – UE Local 300 Bargaining Committee, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Faculty for Justice in Palestine, Faculty for Justice in Palestine at University of California Irvine, HGSU – BDS Caucus of Rank and File Members, CUPE 3903 Palestine Solidarity Working Group, 32BJ Members For Palestine, SFSU YDSA, Maine Labor for Palestine, Pride at Work Eastern Massachusetts, NYC Educators for Palestine, Unidad Latina en Accion, Palestine Solidarity Coalition at Dartmouth, UMass Amherst Students for Justice in Palestine, Met Workers for Palestine, UCSB Faculty Association, UCSC Faculty for Justice in Palestine, Cleveland Jobs with Justice ... and 800+ individual union members.

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