



Student Representative Assembly Meeting 23J
Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 5:00pm (EDT)
Council Chambers, GH 111

Called to Order at 5:12pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Abbott, Ahmad, Batusic, Bolca, Chan, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Keka, Khan, Khandelwal, Mahmoud, Otchere, Pacheco, Popovic, Samuels, Shouldice, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yang, Yao, Zakkar

Absence Excused: Arora, Begun, Suganthan

Absent: Qannam, Su

Late:

Others Present: Abdullah Masudi (MSU Member), Ahmed Raja (Muslim Students Association), Ahmed Al Mudarris (Muslim Students Association), John Kerr (Silhouette Staff Writer), Haadia Surtaj (Muslim Students Association), Lara Mohd (MSU Member), Leen Mahd (Muslim Students Association), Iffah Shaikh (Muslim Students Association), Alisar Elias (MSU Member), Mehreen Shami (Observer), Muhammad Ali (Observer), D. Stajcer (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Territory Recognition

- The SRA would like to recognize today that we are situated on traditional Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territories through the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treaty'.

Adoption of Agenda

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as presented.

Amendment

Moved by Ahmad, **seconded** by Zakkar that the Assembly amend the agenda to move Business item #9 to be directly after Report Period.

- Ahmad said that Business Items #1-8 will take time and they did not want the observers present to have to wait that long.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Vote to Adopt

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Popovic that the Assembly adopt the agenda, as amended.

Passes Unanimously

Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Dodd that the Assembly adopt the minutes from SRA 23H – October 15, 2023 and SRA 23I – October 29, 2023, as amended.

- Hannan said the minutes looked great.

Passes Unanimously

Announcements from Chair

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked everyone to speak loudly for the livestream and for observers to sign the attendance sheet. They asked everyone to pay attention for the whole meeting and to leave their placards up when voting until instructed otherwise. The Chair welcomed new caucus members and asked existing members to guide new members if necessary. They added that, as Speaker, they are responsible for chairing the meeting according to MSU Bylaws and that part of their role is to stay objective.

Report Period

1. Health Sciences Caucus – Yang presented

- Yang summarized the report.

2. Humanities Caucus – Hamman presented

- Hannan summarized the report.

3. Kinesiology Caucus – Ahmad presented

- Ahmad summarized the report.

4. Provincial & Federal Affairs Committee – Abbott presented

- Abbott summarized the report.

5. Finance Committee – Pacheco presented

- Pacheco summarized the report.

6. Executive Board – report circulated

- Otchere summarized the report.

7. President – Popovic presented

- Popovic summarized the report.

8. Vice-President (Education) – Samuels presented

- Samuels reported that Education Team hiring has been delayed due to a long transition period for themselves, but they are conducting AVP University Affairs interviews next week. Samuels said they are approaching budget submissions for the City of Hamilton and the Municipal Affairs Committee is involved

in this. They are working on a document that outlines how we want to see our budget spent. Samuels reported that the Networking Event in the MUSC Atrium went well, and it was great to connect with students. They are also developing social media plans on the MSU Advocacy Instagram account. Samuels added that they've been in contact with peer support services to get them involved in advocacy initiatives. Samuels said they will be attending CASA Advocacy Week and OUSA's Student Advocacy Conference soon.

Questions

- Hu asked why the report was not circulated. Samuels answered that it was due to the demands of preparing for both advocacy weeks.

9. OUSA General Assembly – Samuels presented

- Samuels reported they had a great time and that they were the primary author on the Student Health & Wellness paper. They said the MSU delegation did a wonderful job on advocating for edits even after experiencing turbulence on the floor. They added that the next General Assembly is in March and will be hosted by McMaster. They said the Assembly can expect communication regarding on when GA delegate applications will be open.

Business

1. McMaster Students & Student Groups Affected by Middle East Violence

Moved Popovic, **seconded** El-Kadi that the Student Representative Assembly adopt the following resolution in support of McMaster students and student groups affected by Middle East violence, as noted:

1. **Whereas**, both Palestinian and Israeli students, as well as Jewish and Muslim students have noted a rise in anti-Palestinian and anti-Israeli racism, as well as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, at McMaster University, in Hamilton, other parts of southern Ontario, and internationally; and
2. **Whereas**, media representations and social media commentary related to violence in the Middle East has led to increased threats of harassment and violence against both Israeli and Palestinian identifying students, as well as Muslim and Jewish identifying students at McMaster University; and
3. **Whereas**, McMaster University should be a community free from hate-speech, harassment, and racism, wherein dialogue, events, protests, and discussion should be lawfully protected and peacefully undertaken; and
4. **Whereas**, the death and destruction of innocent lives in Palestine and Israel is abhorrent; and
5. **Whereas**, all Palestinians and Israelis are deserving of peace, security, and freedom from religious or ethnic persecution, threats of violence, and have the right to exist and foster their own self-determination; and
6. **Whereas**, Hamas, defined by the Government of Canada and other nations as a terrorist organization, is widely viewed as an authoritarian regime in Gaza, which overtly seeks the destruction of Israel; and
7. **Whereas**, Hamas is documented to have employed suicide bombings, along with rocket and mortar attacks to kill Israelis; [\[source #1, source #2\]](#) and
8. **Whereas**, according to Israeli authorities, Hamas killed over 1,400 innocent people in Israel, torturing many, and kidnapped more than 200 people on October 7, 2023; [\[source #1, source #2, source #3, source #4\]](#) and

9. **Whereas**, those victims of kidnapping, range from children to elderly people, and remain under threat of torture or death by Hamas until they are released safely; [\[source\]](#) and
10. **Whereas**, Israeli Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant called for a “*complete siege*” of the Gaza Strip. Including a blockade of electricity, food, and fuel, while specifically saying, “*we are fighting human animals, and we act accordingly*”; [\[sources #1, source #2, source #3\]](#) and
11. **Whereas**, seven Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations jointly agreed, “*The Gazan population, half of whom are children, have already suffered many decades of unlawful brutal occupation and lived under the blockade for 16 years*”; [\[source\]](#) and
12. **Whereas**, the *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)* reported in late October, the imminent collapse of fuel reserves, which would prevent necessities, such as hospitals from operating in Gaza, which will lead to a humanitarian catastrophe; [\[source\]](#) and
13. **Whereas**, according to the Palestinian authorities, nearly 10,000 Gazans, including approximately 4,000 children, have already been killed and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [\[source #1, source #2\]](#) and
14. **Whereas**, there is an immediate humanitarian crisis in Gaza; and
15. **Whereas** the United Nations’ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) spokesperson, Liz Throssell has noted nearly 2,000 Palestinians have been arrested since October 7, and that the OHCHR has, “*... received credible and consistent reports indicating a further increase in the ill-treatment of detainees, which in many cases could amount to torture*”; [\[source\]](#) and
16. **Whereas**, Human Rights Watch has noted the use of White Phosphorus by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) in densely populated areas of Gaza, which violates international humanitarian law to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian injury and loss of life [\[source\]](#), though the IDF has denied this claim [\[source\]](#); and
17. **Whereas**, seven Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations jointly agreed that, “*there is an ongoing campaign by Israel resulting in crimes against humanity in Gaza. Considering statements made by Israeli political leaders and their allies, accompanied by military action in Gaza and escalation of arrests and killing in the West Bank, there is also a risk of genocide against the Palestine people*”; [\[source\]](#) and
18. **Whereas**, United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres has called for an immediate ceasefire due to clear violations of international humanitarian law; [\[source\]](#) and
19. **Whereas**, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini has stated, “*an immediate humanitarian ceasefire has become a matter of life and death for millions*”, and that the Israeli Defense Force’s, “*current siege imposed on Gaza is collective punishment.*”; [\[source #1, source #2\]](#) and
20. **Whereas**, the current United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967, Francesca Albanese warned that, “*Palestinians are in grave danger of mass ethnic cleansing*”; [\[source\]](#) and
21. **Whereas**, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967, Michael Lynk and Amnesty International believe the “*political system of entrenched rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip satisfies the prevailing evidentiary standard for the existence of apartheid*”; [\[source #1, source #2, source #3\]](#) and

22. **Whereas**, students at McMaster University oppose apartheid, oppression, ethnic cleansing, terrorism, torture, and kidnapping; and
23. **Whereas**, members of the campus community, including concerned students, as well as the leadership teams of multiple MSU Clubs have been consulted on the creation of this motion, and that it has been properly brought before the Student Representative Assembly for debate; therefore,
24. **Be it resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices condemning the terrorist attacks, torture, and kidnappings perpetuated by Hamas against innocent people in Israel; **be it further**
25. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas; **be it further**
26. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices condemning Hamas' overt desire to destroy Israel; **be it further**
27. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly believes Palestinians and Israelis are deserving of peace, security, and freedom from religious or ethnic persecution, and that Palestinians and Israelis have the right to exist and foster their own self-determination; **be it further**
28. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, in order to save innocent lives in both Gaza and Israel, and to provide humanitarian aid to Gazans; **be it further**
29. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly believes statements made by the Israeli Defense Minister, referring to people as "*human animals*", dehumanizes Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim communities in the Middle East, in Canada, and within McMaster University, which may lead to increased bigotry, hate, and violence here, and around the globe; **be it further**
30. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns the violations of international humanitarian law perpetuated by the Israeli Defense Force towards civilians in Palestine, and of Hamas towards civilians in Israel; **be it further**
31. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly pursuant to Articles 17, 87, and 89 of the Geneva Convention, joins the international chorus of voices denouncing the potential torture of Palestinian detainees in Israel and the potential torture of hostages held by Hamas; **be it further**
32. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling on the Israeli government to end the political system of entrenched rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip which satisfies the prevailing evidentiary standard for the existence of apartheid; **be it further**
33. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian, and anti-Israeli racism, as well as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and hate-speech, and continues to endorse a campus culture of inclusion and safety; **be it further**
34. **Resolved**, that McMaster students should not be ostracized or threatened with violence or harassment for their political beliefs; **be it further**
35. **Resolved**, that the McMaster Students Union (MSU) will promote and support peaceful events, dialogue, and discourse, via the MSU Clubs Department; **be it further**

36. **Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly requests that McMaster University make every reasonable accommodation to students affected by the violence, including leniencies related to course work and deadlines; **be it further**

37. **Resolved**, that the McMaster Students Union will make a financial contribution of \$15,000, split evenly between the Palestinian Childrens' Relief Fund, Hamilton's Anti-Racism Resource Centre, Hamilton Jewish Family Services, and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, contingent on Student Representative Assembly approval of this resolution, as properly expended by Executive Board.

- Popovic informed the Assembly that during the last few weeks, they have been meeting with several students and student groups regarding this matter multiple times and that all other priorities were put on hold. They have responded to concerns on campus and have worked through discussions with University Admin regarding campus security and mental health concerns. Popovic said they took the time to ensure everyone's voice was heard to create something reasonable and also to reflect various priorities. Popovic said they understood the sensitive nature of this and knows that many in the room have been personally affected. They added it is a tragedy, it is heartbreaking to hear about and hopes to continue educating on these events to create a more inclusive campus. They said that McMaster should be a multicultural centre, but noted we haven't felt this lately. Popovic said hopefully this can be the stepping stone to bring people back to together.
- El-Kadi said that this issue served profound sentiments and bounds a longing for peace and justice. They said that these are real people, real lives and suffering and the violence has caused immeasurable pain and has affected communities around the world, including ours. El-Kadi noted that concerns were brought forth from students saying they were feeling unheard and that it is the Assembly's duty to address the impact it is having on people's lives with compassion. They recognized that some readers would have issues with the resolution but said no one group or student defined it - it was drafted after multiple rounds of consultation and numerous hours of research. They urged all Assembly members to consider standing together in support of this resolution.
- Mahmoud thanked both Popovic and El-Kadi for their work on the motion and said bringing it to the forefront was important. They noted that the historical context and the consistency of language stood out to them. They said that beginning the statement with Hamas being defined as a terrorist organization without giving context to the current occupation of Palestine feeds into a narrative that groups in Middle East are inherently violent with no precedent. Mahmoud added that in the statement, there is omission of responsibility when talking about who Palestinians have been killed by or who they have been arrested by. They said that placing responsibility is important but how our stance affects students is the most important thing.
- Abbott thanked Popovic and El-Kadi for putting together the statement and for consulting student groups. They said it was valuable to consider different voices. They felt it was important to address things that are happening on campus and keep students updated on what is going on so that moving forward, students can interact with each other without some of the issues we are facing. Abbott said the statement was well-written and that it was important for the MSU to address the problem.
- Zakkar said that the statement is very informative but questioned if statistics would be up to date when the statement is released. They pointed out that death counts have risen and wanted to ensure the accuracy of the statistics outlined.

Amendment

Moved by Zakkar, **seconded** by Ahmad that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 8

From:

"Whereas, according to Israeli authorities, Hamas killed over 1,400 innocent people in Israel, torturing many, and kidnapped more than 200 people on October 7, 2023; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#), [source #4](#)] and"

To:

“Whereas, according to Israeli authorities, Hamas killed over **1,200 IDF personnel and** innocent people in Israel, torturing many, and kidnapped more than 200 people on October 7, 2023; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#), [source #4](#)] and”

Section 13

From:

“Whereas, according to the Palestinian authorities, nearly 10,000 Gazans, including approximately 4,000 children, have already been killed and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#)] and”

To:

“Whereas, according to the Palestinian authorities, **over 11,000 Gazans, including over 4,500** children, have already been killed and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#)] and”

- Zakkar stated that the articles included in the amendment re-correct the statistics and noted that using the same source is important. They added that deaths are rising everyday and that the motion should be up to date.
- Popovic asked the Speaker to specifically state the changes to the motion. The Speaker outlined the specific changes, as noted above.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Moved by El-Kadi, **seconded by** Samuels that the Assembly recess for 10 minutes.

- El-Kadi said that a break would be nice.

Vote on Motion

Passes Unanimously

Moved by Yang, **seconded by** Khan that the Assembly extend recess by 10 minutes.

- Yang said that additional few minutes would be beneficial.

Vote on Motion

In Favour: 23 Opposed: 2 Abstentions: 0
Opposed: Wang, Batusic
Motion Passes

Recessed at 6:51pm

Called to order at 7:15pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Abbott, Ahmad, Batusic, Bolca, Chan, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Keka, Khan, Khandelwal, Mahmoud, Otchere, Pacheco, Popovic, Samuels, Shouldice, Wang, Yang, Yao, Zakkar

Absence Excused: Arora, Begun, Suganthan
Absent: Qannam, Su
Late: Thusyanthan
Others Present: Abdullah Masudi (MSU Member), Ahmed Raja (Muslim Students Association), Ahmed Al Mudarris (Muslim Students Association), John Kerr (Silhouette Staff Writer), Haadia Surtaj (Muslim Students Association), Lara Mohd (MSU Member), Leen Mahd (Muslim Students Association), Iffah Shaikh (Muslim Students Association), Alisar Elias (MSU Member), Mehreen Shami (Observer), Muhammad Ali (Observer), D. Stajcer (Recording Secretary)
Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Amendment

Moved by Mahmoud, **seconded** by Yao that the Assembly amend the motion to move Section 28, as listed, to be between Section 23 and 24:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, in order to save innocent lives in both Gaza and Israel, and to provide humanitarian aid to Gazans; **be it further”**

- Mahmoud said it was important to move this statement to be the first “resolved” statement because of the pressing nature of the violence. They added that calling for ceasefire should be top priority as it is a tangible thing that can be done from a student union perspective.
- Yao agree with Mahmoud’s statements.

Vote on Amendment

In Favour: 21 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 6
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Wang, Batusic
Motion Passes

Amendment

Moved by Hannan, **seconded** by Mahmoud that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 25

From:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas; **be it further”**

To:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas **and the Israeli Defense Forces; be it further”**

- Hannan said they were approached by students present who felt this change would more accurately represent how students would like it to look. They said what is most important to them right now is for all students to be fully represented and implored all students to reach out if there is something they can help with.
- Mahmoud echoed the comments of Hannan and wanted to ensure all parties were held accountable.

Vote on Amendment

In Favour: 19 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 9
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Hannan, Dodd, Yang, John, Forbes
Motion Passes

Amendment

Moved by Mahmoud, **seconded** by Zakkar that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 13

From:

“Whereas, according to the Palestinian authorities, over 11,000 Gazans, including over 4,500 children, have already been killed and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#)] and”

To:

“Whereas, according to the Palestinian authorities, **Israeli forces have killed** over 11,000 Gazans, including over 4,500 children, **have already been killed** and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#)] and”

- Mahmoud wanted to ensure that the wording placed responsibility on the Israeli forces. They added the wording is also consistent with the sources included.

Vote on Amendment to Amendment

In Favour: 8 Opposed: 6 Abstentions: 13
Opposed: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Gono, Abbott
Abstained: Hannan, Dodd, Khandelwal, Hu, Keka, Ellis, Khan, Yang, John, Wang, Ahmad, Bolca, Forbes
Motion Passes

Amendment

Moved by Popovic, **seconded** by Dodd that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 26

From:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chouse of voices condemning Hamas’ overt desire to destroy Israel; **be it further”**

To:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international **chorus** of voices condemning Hamas’ overt desire to destroy Israel; **be it further”**

- Popovic noted this was simply a spelling correction.

Vote on Amendment

Passes Unanimously

Amendment

Moved by Mahmoud, **seconded** by Zakkar that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Add to very beginning of statement:

“Whereas current events in Palestine and Israel require historical context to be fully understood; and”

- Mahmoud wanted to ensure there was some mention of the historical context between the two countries before getting into the rest of the statement, which will then invite community members to look into the history themselves.
- Zakkar noted it is a complex issue that has been ongoing prior to October 7th.

Vote on Amendment

In Favour: 18 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 9
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Chan, Hannan, Dodd, Gono, Wang
Motion Passes

Amendment

Moved by Yang, **seconded** by Yao that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 25

From: **“Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas and the Israeli Defense Forces; **be it further”**

To: **“Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas and the **safe return of detainees taken by** Israeli Defense Forces; **be it further”**

- Yang said this was brought up while voting on the previous amendment. They were looking for sources to ensure everything was factually correct and couldn't find anything explicitly mentioning kidnapped victims taken by IDF, but there is strong evidence that back up the increase of detainees taken by IDF. They added that because they are not consulting with all student groups on the spot, they want to ensure the best possible language is being used.

Vote on Amendment to Amendment

In Favour: 17 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 10
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Hannan, Hu, John, Gono, Wang, Batusic
Motion Passes

Back to Main Motion

- Zakkar noted that there is no “be it resolved” statement for “whereas” statements #10 and #13 that reference the blockade of electricity, food, and fuel.
- Dodd agreed with Zakkar, but felt several of the “be it resolved” statements reference humanitarian aid and violations of humanitarian law. They felt like it was covered but was open to amending.
- Yang said that in the original fifth and seventh “be it resolved” statements there is mention of this and asked if this covered the concern.
- Dodd noted that that in the original fifth and seventh “be it resolved” statements, there is reference to providing humanitarian aid to Gazans and humanitarian law and thought this fell under the umbrella of food and water.

Amendment

Moved by Mahmoud, **seconded** by Zakkar that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 30

From: **“Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns the violations of international humanitarian law perpetuated by the Israeli Defense Force towards civilians in Palestine, and of Hamas towards civilians in Israel; **be it further”**

To: **“Resolved**, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns the violations of international humanitarian law **such as the deprivation of basic human rights** perpetuated by the Israeli Defense Force towards civilians in Palestine, and of Hamas towards civilians in Israel; **be it further resolved”**

- Zakkar said that no access to food and water is a violation of human rights and it should be explicitly stated that they are being deprived of this.

Vote on Amendment

In Favour: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 19
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Chan, Hannan, Dodd, Khandelwal, Hu, Keka, Ellis, Khan, Yang, John, Wang, Batusic, Bolca, Forbes, Abbott
Motion Passes

Amendment

Moved by Khan, **seconded** by Mahmoud that the Assembly amend the motion to read:

Section 30

From:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices condemning Hamas’ overt desire to destroy Israel; **be it further”**

To:

“Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices condemning Hamas’ overt desire to destroy Israel, **and the dehumanization of Palestinians by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF); be it further”**

- Khan wanted to keep consistent with the neutral tone throughout and on both sides.
- Mahmoud said it was very important to talk about dehumanizing of Palestinians as it can impact students on campus. They added that rephrasing it can validate what students are going through.
- Zakkar added that the whole point of the statement is to maintain neutrality.

Vote on Amendment to Amendment

In Favour: 14 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 13
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Hannan, Dodd, Khandelwal, John, Gono, Wang, Batusic, Forbes, Abbott
Motion Passes

Moved by Abbott, **seconded** by El-Kadi that the Assembly recess for 15 minutes.

In Favour: 24 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 3
Abstained: Khandelwal, Batusic, Wang
Motion Passes

Recessed at 8:31pm

Call to order at 8:52pm

Call of the Roll

Present: Abbott, Ahmad, Batusic, Bolca, Chan, Dodd, El-Kadi, Ellis, Forbes, Gono, Hannan, Hu, John, Keka, Khan, Khandelwal, Mahmoud, Otchere, Pacheco, Popovic, Samuels, Shouldice, Thusyanthan, Wang, Yang, Yao, Zakkar

Absence Excused: Arora, Begun, Suganthan

Absent: Qannam, Su

Late:

Others Present: Abdullah Masudi (MSU Member), Ahmed Raja (Muslim Students Association), Ahmed Al Mudarris (Muslim Students Association), John Kerr (Silhouette Staff Writer), Haadia Surtaj (Muslim Students Association), Lara Mohd (MSU Member), Leen Mahd (Muslim Students Association), Iffah Shaikh (Muslim Students Association), Alisar Elias (MSU Member), Mehreen Shami (Observer), Muhammad Ali (Observer), D. Stajcer (Recording Secretary)

Chair: Aiman Dhiloon (MSU Speaker)

Vote on Main Motion

Moved Popovic, **seconded** El-Kadi that the Student Representative Assembly adopt the following resolution in support of McMaster students and student groups affected by Middle East violence, as noted:

Whereas, current events in Palestine and Israel require historical context to be fully understood; and

Whereas, both Palestinian and Israeli students, as well as Jewish and Muslim students have noted a rise in anti-Palestinian and anti-Israeli racism, as well as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, at McMaster University, in Hamilton, other parts of southern Ontario, and internationally; and

Whereas, media representations and social media commentary related to violence in the Middle East has led to increased threats of harassment and violence against both Israeli and Palestinian identifying students, as well as Muslim and Jewish identifying students at McMaster University; and

Whereas, McMaster University should be a community free from hate-speech, harassment, and racism, wherein dialogue, events, protests, and discussion should be lawfully protected and peacefully undertaken; and

Whereas, the death and destruction of innocent lives in Palestine and Israel is abhorrent; and

Whereas, all Palestinians and Israelis are deserving of peace, security, and freedom from religious or ethnic persecution, threats of violence, and have the right to exist and foster their own self-determination; and

Whereas, Hamas, defined by the Government of Canada and other nations as a terrorist organization, is widely viewed as an authoritarian regime in Gaza, which overtly seeks the destruction of Israel; and

Whereas, Hamas is documented to have employed suicide bombings, along with rocket and mortar attacks to kill Israelis; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#)] and

Whereas, according to Israeli authorities, Hamas killed over 1,200 IDF personnel and innocent people in Israel, torturing many, and kidnapped more than 200 people on October 7, 2023; [[source #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#), [source #4](#)] and

Whereas, those victims of kidnapping, range from children to elderly people, and remain under threat of torture or death by Hamas until they are released safely; [[source](#)] and

Whereas, Israeli Defense Minister, Yoav Gallant called for a “*complete siege*” of the Gaza Strip. Including a blockade of electricity, food, and fuel, while specifically saying, “*we are fighting human animals, and we act accordingly*”; [[sources #1](#), [source #2](#), [source #3](#)] and

Whereas, seven Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations jointly agreed, “*The Gazan population, half of whom are children, have already suffered many decades of unlawful brutal occupation and lived under the blockade for 16 years*”; [[source](#)] and

Whereas, the *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)* reported in late October, the imminent collapse of fuel reserves, which would prevent necessities, such as hospitals from operating in Gaza, which will lead to a humanitarian catastrophe; [\[source\]](#) and

Whereas, according to the Palestinian authorities, Israeli forces have killed over 11,000 Gazans, including over 4,500 children, and Gazans continue to suffer under complete siege with eroding access to water, food, fuel, and subsequently healthcare and education; [\[source #1, source #2, source #3\]](#)

Whereas, there is an immediate humanitarian crisis in Gaza; and

Whereas the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) spokesperson, Liz Throssell has noted nearly 2,000 Palestinians have been arrested since October 7, and that the OHCHR has, "*... received credible and consistent reports indicating a further increase in the ill-treatment of detainees, which in many cases could amount to torture*"; [\[source\]](#) and

Whereas, Human Rights Watch has noted the use of White Phosphorus by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) in densely populated areas of Gaza, which violates international humanitarian law to take all feasible precautions to avoid civilian injury and loss of life [\[source\]](#), though the IDF has denied this claim [\[source\]](#); and

Whereas, seven Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations jointly agreed that, "*there is an ongoing campaign by Israel resulting in crimes against humanity in Gaza. Considering statements made by Israeli political leaders and their allies, accompanied by military action in Gaza and escalation of arrests and killing in the West Bank, there is also a risk of genocide against the Palestine people*"; [\[source\]](#) and

Whereas, United Nations Secretary General, António Guterres has called for an immediate ceasefire due to clear violations of international humanitarian law; [\[source\]](#) and

Whereas, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Philippe Lazzarini has stated, "*an immediate humanitarian ceasefire has become a matter of life and death for millions*", and that the Israeli Defense Force's, "*current siege imposed on Gaza is collective punishment*."; [\[source #1, source #2\]](#) and

Whereas, the current United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967, Francesca Albanese warned that, "*Palestinians are in grave danger of mass ethnic cleansing*"; [\[source\]](#) and

Whereas, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied Since 1967, Michael Lynk and Amnesty International believe the "*political system of entrenched rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip satisfies the prevailing evidentiary standard for the existence of apartheid*"; [\[source #1, source #2, source #3\]](#) and

Whereas, students at McMaster University oppose apartheid, oppression, ethnic cleansing, terrorism, torture, and kidnapping; and

Whereas, members of the campus community, including concerned students, as well as the leadership teams of multiple MSU Clubs have been consulted on the creation of this motion, and that it has been properly brought before the Student Representative Assembly for debate; therefore,

Be it resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, in order to save innocent lives in both Gaza and Israel, and to provide humanitarian aid to Gazans; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices condemning the terrorist attacks, torture, and kidnappings perpetuated by Hamas against innocent people in Israel; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling for the safe return of kidnapped victims taken by Hamas and the safe return of detainees taken by Israeli Defense Forces; [\[source\]](#) **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international **chorus** of voices condemning Hamas' overt desire to destroy Israel, and the dehumanization of Palestinians by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF); **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly believes Palestinians and Israelis are deserving of peace, security, and freedom from religious or ethnic persecution, and that Palestinians and Israelis have the right to exist and foster their own self-determination; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly believes statements made by the Israeli Defense Minister, referring to people as "*human animals*", dehumanizes Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim communities in the Middle East, in Canada, and within McMaster University, which may lead to increased bigotry, hate, and violence here, and around the globe; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns the violations of international humanitarian law such as the deprivation of basic human rights perpetuated by the Israeli Defense Force towards civilians in Palestine, and of Hamas towards civilians in Israel; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly pursuant to Articles 17, 87, and 89 of the Geneva Convention, joins the international chorus of voices denouncing the potential torture of Palestinian detainees in Israel and the potential torture of hostages held by Hamas; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly joins the international chorus of voices calling on the Israeli government to end the political system of entrenched rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip which satisfies the prevailing evidentiary standard for the existence of apartheid; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly condemns anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian, and anti-Israeli racism, as well as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and hate-speech, and continues to endorse a campus culture of inclusion and safety; **be it further**

Resolved, that McMaster students should not be ostracized or threatened with violence or harassment for their political beliefs; **be it further**

Resolved, that the McMaster Students Union (MSU) will promote and support peaceful events, dialogue, and discourse, via the MSU Clubs Department; **be it further**

Resolved, that the Student Representative Assembly requests that McMaster University make every reasonable accommodation to students affected by the violence, including leniencies related to course work and deadlines; **be it further**

Resolved, that the McMaster Students Union will make a financial contribution of \$15,000, split evenly between the Palestinian Childrens' Relief Fund, Hamilton's Anti-Racism Resource Centre, Hamilton Jewish Family Services, and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, contingent on Student Representative Assembly approval of this resolution, as properly expended by Executive Board.

In Favour: 21 Opposed: 0 Abstentions: 5
Abstained: Popovic, El-Kadi, Otchere, Samuels, Wang
Motion Passes

Moved by Hu, **seconded** by Otchere that the meeting be adjourned.

Passes Unanimously

Adjourned at 9:07PM

/ds