

*Expert says Israeli universities
central pillar of oppression
against Palestinians*



New York, March 18 (RHC)-- Israeli universities in the United States and Europe have deprived Palestinian students of their rights to freedom and are regarded as a "central pillar" of the occupying regime's oppression against Palestinians, says a Jewish scholar.

Maya Wind, a postdoctoral fellow in anthropology at the University of British Columbia, made the comment in her newly-released book, *Towers of Ivory and Steel: How Israeli Universities Deny Palestinian Freedom*, which documents how Israeli universities constrain Palestinian rights by supporting and developing the policies of occupation and apartheid used by the Israeli regime.

"In the West, Israeli universities are considered bastions of pluralism and democracy, but, in fact, Palestinian faculty, scholars, students, activists have for over two decades contended that they are a central pillar of Israel's regime of oppression against Palestinians," Wind said.

Stressing that Israeli universities are directly complicit in the violation of Palestinian rights, the scholar said, "Academic disciplines, degree programs, campus infrastructure, and research laboratories all service Israeli occupation and apartheid, while universities violate the rights of Palestinians to education, stifle critical scholarship, and violently repress student dissent."

Wind underlined that, "Israeli universities are indeed deeply, deeply implicated in the violation of Palestinian rights." The Jewish academic also pointed to a recent report by The Intercept that said the Israeli military destroyed "every single university in the Gaza Strip" within the first 100 days of Israel's ongoing aggression on Gaza.

Nearly one hundred university deans and professors and three university presidents in Gaza lost their lives in the Israeli assault. Over 4,300 students, more than 230 professors, teachers, administrators were also killed.

"It is important to note that Israel has destroyed every single Palestinian university in the Gaza Strip. So it is not only committing genocide, but also what Karma Nabulsi and other Palestinian intellectuals have long called scholasticide, the intentional destruction of Palestinian education," she said.

"This is very intentional; this is part of a broader project by the Israel to destroy Palestinian education as a means to destroy the Palestinian liberation movement," she added. "What is really devastating is not only the destruction of Palestinian universities, all of them in Gaza, but also the absolute failure of any of the Israeli universities, that are in fact directly facilitating this destruction, to speak out against it. Where is the defense of Palestinian academic freedom?"

Wind stressed that Israeli universities have "disallowed" any debate or research about the regime's ongoing genocidal war against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip. "Palestinian and critical Jewish Israeli students and scholars have been summoned to disciplinary committees and have been suspended for speaking out against this genocide, for conducting research about the Nakba, which is the mass expulsion of over two-thirds of the Palestinian population that enabled the founding of the Israeli" regime, the scholar said.

"And so, we are seeing this is a broad project of repressing critical research and debate, which is really the bedrock of higher education. But this is disallowed in the Israeli university system."

Israel waged its brutal U.S.-backed war on the Gaza Strip on October 7 after Palestinian resistance groups carried out a historic operation against the usurping entity in retaliation for the regime's intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

So far, the Tel Aviv regime has killed at least 31,553 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 73,546 others.

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