

Riot police violently break up pro-Palestine occupation of University of Amsterdam



Amsterdam, April 15 (RHC)-- Riot police have arrested a number of demonstrators who occupied a University of Amsterdam administrative complex on Monday, calling on the UvA to break its ties with Israeli academic institutions.

The university had filed a formal complaint about the occupation earlier in the day and after several hours, police ordered the students to leave. When they refused, officers entered the building via the basement, on the orders of the city's mayor.

The protesters were removed one by one and taken to a waiting police van, while around 200 supporters gathered outside, cheering and chanting. Some clashed with officers, who used batons to break up the crowd.

Students inside the Maagdenhuis spray-painted slogans on the walls and hung banners and Palestinian flags from the windows. They also lit flares in the colours of the Palestinian flag. According to Amsterdam University chairwoman Edith Hooge, some had also brought tools with them to build barricades.

After the building was cleared, demonstrators who remained outside said they planned to continue their protest by “walking.” Some moved to another university building, where they were quickly removed by police.

The protesters said in a statement said their action targeted the university board, accusing it of ignoring the concerns of students and staff and making undemocratic, non-transparent decisions.

Amsterdam University recently suspended cooperation with the Hebrew University in Jerusalem following advice from its ethics committee. However, it still maintains ties with other Israeli universities and has indicated it wants to restore relations with the Hebrew University in the future.

Hooge said the university would not respond to the protesters’ demands. “You are allowed to demonstrate here, but this is something else entirely. This is a group that enters anonymously, wearing masks, and barricades themselves inside the building. We will not engage with that.”

A similar action took place at Radboud University in Nijmegen, where pro-Palestinian students occupied a bridge connecting two university buildings. They are also calling for an end to cooperation with Israeli institutions.

[SOURCE: DUTCH NEWS]

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