

Georgetown University students endorse divestment from Israel in referendum



A view of a protest at Georgetown University in Washington, DC (Photo by Getty Images)

Washington, May 1 (RHC)-- Students have voted to approve a referendum calling on Georgetown University in Washington, DC to divest from companies supporting the Israeli military and end partnerships with Israeli institutions involved in the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip.

The Georgetown University Student Association (GUSA) election commission announced on Tuesday that referendum has passed with 1,447 (67.9%) votes in favor, and 685 (32.1%) against.

The GUSA Election Commission went on to say that 2,132 students had voted, comprising 29.5% of the student body, noting that all such referendums require at least 25% of students to vote, with the majority voting in favor, in order to pass.

The referendum was first introduced in a GUSA Senate meeting on April 6th.

Students supporting the referendum argued that Georgetown's investments make it complicit in Israel's actions in its war on Gaza, creating a moral obligation to divest from Israel.

Georgetown's divestment referendum came after a number of similar initiatives at universities around the country. Although the referendum passed, it is not binding on the university.

Robert M. Groves, Interim President at Georgetown University, announced just half an hour after referendum results came out that it will not follow the demands of the divestment referendum.

"Georgetown will not implement this referendum, based on our institutional values and history and existing university resources and processes that address our investments," he wrote in an email.

Groves also noted that he recognizes there is a wide range of opinions on the conflict in West Asia "within our community." "We have numerous events to present different perspectives on the conflict. Guided by the University's Policy on Speech and Expression, we will continue to protect the right of members of our community to freely express their views," he said.

The latest development comes as the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is investigating scores of universities for what it claims to be anti-Semitic acts following months-long academic demonstrations in support of Palestinians suffering Israel's brutal aggression on the besieged Gaza Strip.

Trump signed an executive order in January to combat what was claimed to be anti-Semitism and pledged to deport non-citizen college students and others who took part in pro-Palestinian protests.

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