

Northwestern University

Associated Student Government

Meeting of the Senate

February, 11, 2014

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**
2. **Approval of the Journal:** Available at [bit.ly/ASG-Senate-Minutes](http://bit.ly/ASG-Senate-Minutes). (Audio: [here](https://drive.google.com/a/u.northwestern.edu/file/d/0BzdYeA3pFsZmdzdUNC1NclRGTDA/view))
3. [**Executive Board Reports**](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s4qwB5j2JrizsEYgwaIvffdUU18TwJq9PcP2GlQsYm0/edit#bookmark=kix.1tx6i3ka0ej8)
4. **General Order:** [Student Group Senate Seat Apportionment](https://docs.google.com/a/u.northwestern.edu/document/d/1I5EJNcrPongFG-T9Paev8l5BpL8OFk2XMMN5xHcH1HM/edit)
5. **General Order:** Social Inequalities and Diversity Requirement

* Austin: We are from the Accessibility and Inclusion committee. Just to give you an overview, currently there is a petition going around calling for WCAS to conider a US focus to their Social Inequalities requirement. WCAS has been doing this so far with very little student involvement and awareness. If ASG’s stance is it should be US focused and right now they are considering an international focus.
* Amol: In the last couple months, faculty has pushed to have international classes fulfill this proposal. The initial proposal was to have the class focus on social inequalities that relate back to what is in our own backyard.
* Austin: That’s the ASG stance and definitely not the stance you have to take. There is going to be forum and we would love your opinion.

1. **Old Business:** [SR1415-08 Northwestern Divestment Resolution](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s4qwB5j2JrizsEYgwaIvffdUU18TwJq9PcP2GlQsYm0/edit#bookmark=id.h496h0wit79g) (note: I missed a lot, including names, which is why sometimes there are dashes instead of names. Additionally, I misspelled names! If you would like me to correct anything in here, please email [asg-parliamentarian@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:asg-parliamentarian@u.northwestern.edu))

* Authorship speech:
* Imtisal: It is amazing to see how many people the NUDivest team has mobilized and how many discussions we’ve started. I am here because I support NUDivest and because it matters. In this speech we will clear up misconceptions, tell you why we are here, and why you should care. The NUDivest resolution is not BDS because it is impossible to be BDS. BDS is a call from Palestinian society, they have asked us not be complicit. We are not endorsing a political decision. The one state and two state debate is irrelevant and derailing, because it is premature. Before that debate can happen, we need to address human rights. The oppression of the Palestinians is linked to the oppression of people all over the year. Now please listen to what NU Divest is.
* These companies are reaping the benefit of a system that violates human rights. Human PAckard technology was used today to limit the movement of Palestinians. Today G4S benefitted from Palestinian prisoners. It will be a Caterpillar bulldozer that will crush the homes of Palestinians. This past summer, hundreds of Palestinian people died because of weapons provided by Lockeed Martin and Boeing. Senators, this is about divesting from human rights violations.
* Noah: We understand the result of this is going to be limited in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On this campus, Northwestern is complicit in the oppression of Palestinian people. Senators, it is key to see how many people care about this. We want to propose a small amendment to clarify.
* Motion to previous question.
* Passes.
* We are now in line for question period.
* Nathan: You have said it’s not in line with BDS because it’s not a movement. What part do you not support?
* Noah: We are only talking about divestment, not boycotts or sanctions.
* Grant: When would the correct time for peace talks?
* Noah: Peace talks have been the status quo and nothing has happened. Divestment is a way to uphold human rights, not a political solution.
* Julia: What does it mean to be a grassroots movement for you?
* Noah: Our support and organizing comes from Northwestern students. We haven’t has any sort of national organization telling us what to do.
* Jonathan: Did you write the resolution yourselves?
* Imtisal: We collaborated as students.
* Scott: You say you’re not in favor of one state or two state, but in Norris there was a picture with only one color.
* Noah: We weren’t talking about a one state solution, we were just painting the land and green is a normal way to color land.
* Mckayla: Point of clarification, there was a palestinian map next to the picture.
* Christina: What does it mean to divest operationally as a university?
* Noah: It involves not investing in mutual funds with these companies. It also involves socially i
* Parag: What are the next steps if this passes?
* Noah: We will be talking to the administration.
* Nick: Have you talked to the administration this far?
* Imtisal: We have not yet and that’s because we wanted to get student support first.
* Jacob: Why not just call for transparency, since you say that’s the most important part?
* Noah: Without student pressure, schools do not divest from companies profiting of of Palestinian human rights.
* Corey: Does supporting Palestinian rights require political action?
* Imtisal:
* Amy: Why not go for transparency first if we don’t know if we’re involved?
* Noah: There has been confirmation that the chances are practically 0 that we aren’t.
* Noah: Does your resolution call for addressing palestinian violation of israeli rights?
* Imtisal: This calls for divestment from state sanctioned violence.
* Noah: Northwestern is not and cannot be invested in Hamas.
* Motion to extend question period by 5 minutes.
* Elliott: Why did NUDivest not reach out to J Street U, Hillel, or other organizations before this?
* Noah: We did reach out to J Street and assumed the others would not support us if they didn’t.
* Josh: Clarification, Noah reached out to me after they started their campaign, not after.
* Nathan: Explicitly, what is not in line with BDS
* Noah: This resolution does not call for Boycotts or Sanctions.
* Rachel: What about all the other elements other than those three words?
* Imtisal: That question is not relevant.
* Why did the organizations that put their name on your resolution support you?
* Noah: We’ve seen that nobody lives single issue lives. We stand in solidarity to each other while searching for justice.
* Jake: If divestment is the furthest political statement, can you talk about your use of the word Apartheid.
* Noah: We are using the UN definition of the word, not comparing to South Africa.
* Gideon: Northwestern has very diverse portfolio, why aren’t you targeting other issues?
* Noah: this plays into our issue of transparency and in theory that would be addressed. This is the one we are talking about right now.
* Nadia: How are these organizations involved in this summer’s violence in Gaza
* -: All these companies are complicit in one way or another. Specifically Boeing and Lockheed Martin manufacture helicopters. We saw a massive amount of death this summer and as students we were shocked by that. It’s another reason why this vill is so important.
* Joe: I know you can’t mention all the groups, but can you tell any of them? I couldn’t find them.
* Serene: Kairos which is a Christian Palestinian group, Packbe about the academic and cultural groups, etc.
* Rachel: You said this will have limited effects but what is the ultimate goal.
* Noah: In my authorship speech I addressed this. To say it will have no effect, is a bit of a stretch. Northwestern can contribute to support. And there will be tangible difference on our campus.
* -: Why are you not calling for a political solution?
* Noah: We believe that a political solution cannot be achieved without a solid foundation
* -: How can you justify chalking like Zionism = murder?
* Noah: The individual who wrote Zionism = racism does not reflect the beliefs of NUDivest.
* Isaac: Motion to amend. The amendment is right after the last amendment add: “**Whereas,**  passage of this resolution constitutes a response to the divestment component of the call;” This resolution as currently written and amended is about human rights violations. With this amendment hopefully the views of this body will be even more clear.
* Nathan: Simply removing one line is insufficient to separate NUDivest from BDS. NUDivest has linked itself for BDS and even with the amendment, BDS will declare victory. After a similar amendment was added at Berkeley, BDS still said Berkeley was a victory. Option 3 in the BDS handbook is what this amendment is. Is the signal we want to send one that explicitly calls on the BDS handbook? This amendment changes nothing. If this passes, it should be clear what it is, a firm support of BDS.
* Moira: I want to clear up something about what this amendment does. This is a clarifying amendment and it is not intended to change the content of what the resolution does. There are obviously a lot of continued confusion and it is intended to send a clear message on exactly what this resolution is doing. This amendment makes the intention clear and that is what we should be talking about. The previous speaker was right that it doesn’t change what the resolution is going for.
* Lauren: On NUDivest’s website they say that they are in support of the movement. More importantly at Oberlin and UCLA, they took out reference to BDS and were still considered a victory for BDS.
* Motion to previous question.
* Passes.
* Noah: We are now in line for the first con.
* Mitchell: Members of ASG exec, senators, student, faculty, I speak to you as a student strongly opposed to this and a member of the coalition for peace. This debate is not about the merits of a socially responsible investment policy. We are too and there are other ways to do that. The resolution is not about taking sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict either. You need to decide whether you want Northwestern to align itself with the BDS movement. We want respect, not picking sides. If you as a Senator have any doubts about aligning us with BDS, then vote no.
* FMO: In line with FMO’s media policy, we are not to be quoted or associated with anything like that until we see it. As the representative of black students on campus, we fight for the rights of minority groups. Oppression is linked across oceans. We see BDS as an important way to stop this violence. Right now is a moment of crucial solidarity. Along the history of FMO and across campus, black students have been harassed for speaking out against human rights violations. In similar ways, so have the NUDivest organizers. We are standing in solidarity with them. Consider that all oppression is connected. If you are choosing to be complicit in this oppression, you are complicit in all oppression.
* Jaqueline Soria: What is the impact of passing this? We aren’t actually debating divestment. We are debating whether to ask the university for divestment. The bill does not include a call for socially responsible divestment. Additionally, Northwestern is likely invested in mutual funds that are nearly impossible to divest from. This bill is not about divestment. Activism should be about making an impact and since it is highly unlikely that Northwestern will divest, this is not the right way. The only way the campaign makes an impact is to strengthen the BDS movement. It is no step forward and a leap toward supporting BDS.
* Serene: I have given love and time to Northwestern and for the first time I am asking for NU to love me back. Today I am referring to Palestinians as we and all parts of me tell em to call for this. If you are willing to allow companies to treat Palestinians in Palestine like this, would you let them treat me this way?
* Josh Schwartz: Framing it’s campaign as standing on the right side of history, NUDivest is making us choose which human rights to support. If we allow this partisan climate to persist, it will a long time before we can make progressive change. Extremism and divisiveness is not what we need. What legacy do we want to leave behind? In my eyes, the key is through dialogue. Not the debate we saw hosted by PU, sustained dialogues. If that is not possible, then that’s fine, but we need to try. We risk putting a major obstacle. We are the perfect candidates to model coexistence, please give us a chance to move forward.
* Imtisal: I’d like to cede my time to Serene.
* Serene: We have been working for peace, why won’t you wait for us to save you? Palestinians asked, they are the ones suffering, not you. It is Israel that is the one state. When peace means the status quo and you refuse to be moved by your peer’s call for you to listen, it is a peace that suffocates. Israel asked the US gov for millions of dollars for support. You give Israel all of this if you like it or not. All Palestinians ask for is your support. Will you ask that I throw the Palestinian part of me back to the margins?
* What is the relationship between this and the ASA statement last year?
* Imtisal: There is no relation. Our resolution has nothing about an academic boycott. Your confusion might be that SJP did hold events on that.
* Scott Spicer: This resolution places blame just on Israel by ignoring facts and context. NUDivest says you don’t need to know the context and frames the issue as only Israeli’s fault. Almost a thousand Israeli casualties occurred from suicide bombings on busses. Cities close to gaza had only 30 seconds before knowing when they would be hit. Instead, vote for a bilateral process.
* Motion to extend by half an hour.
* Second.
* Ruba: I am a Palestinian. This is the single most important topic in my life. My good friend Serene is always telling me to speak the truth even if my voice shakes. It is rare that for ASG that we are asked to humanize a people. You have peers in this room that are familiar with this oppression. Some of us can list the year our family lost the right to return to our home. Some of us can tell you when we became refugees. I understand you may not. You do know Northwestern. You became complicit when you entered into Northwestern. Do not forget to have values is to practice them. The way you vote won’t return my family to our village or to make a group uncomfortable more than the discomfort of Palestinians.
* Tamar: I want to state that I stand in a supporter of both palestine and Israel. Voting yes will link the Northwestern campus to the BDS movement. If this passes, our name will be added to the BDS victories. Palestinians like Israelis are divided in this issue and NUDivest should not speak for all Palestinians. You have the responsibility for deciding what Northwestern students support. Palestinian writers and activist speak against BDS, because negative campaigns just. There is no way to make this decision without a political decision.
* Daniel: What are the consequences of NU being counted as a victory.
* Tamar: The BDS has made several statements that they don’t respect Israel’s right to exist.
* Ruba: Can you speak for who makes decisions to BDS?
* Noah: Some supporters don’t support a two state and some do.
* Ruba: If today was truly rational, I wouldn’t have to discuss human rights. Palestinians have been for decades robbed of their voices. How can I be expected to share the forced silence within me in two minutes? Your voice and vote has the power to dismiss us or support us. As with every struggle in the past, there are some of us who see the suffering and some who don’t.
* Anabelle: I can stand here and tell you about the civilians of that have been living under threat of bombs. The only difference in the death toll is because of Israel’s defense. I am not going to pretend that Israel is the victim, but I’m not going to say the Palestinians are either. Voting for divestment is pointing fingers. The beauty of Northwestern is that it encourages its students to listen to both sides. The divestment movement rejects everything NU is about, it sets the precedence for divisiveness.
* Parag: I firmly believe that senators should vote in favor of this. First because it neutralizes the narrative. Standing in solidarity with Palestinians allow that to happen. This resolution allows us to open up a space for discourse. All this is asking for us to to vote in favor of a resolution against human rights. With BDS, not everyone in that movement thinks the same thing. All this asks of us is to recognize suffering and not be complicit.
* How should we look at the resolution?
* Parag: Look at it first and foremost whether NU should divest and then look at the context. I don’t see the negative outcome, because I see this as a win for Palestinians not BDS.
* Eli: I’d like to speak further about the connection to the global BDS movement. While they have tried to delink this from the wider movement. But in reality it is born from the BDS campaign. SJP actively promoted a boycott of Israeli academics. Additional connections between the movement can be seen in it’s sponsors. Many of whom have openly endorsed the BDS movement. The website says NUDivest supports BDS, but the leaders have clearly felt the urge to separate themselves from BDS. Passing this would make NU an unfortunate victory of the BDS movement.
* Alianza: We are here and sponsored this resolution because we refuse to remain complicit in human rights violations. We understand that we don’t live single issue lives. I can’t ignore this and while my family is not Palestinian, my family that has immigrated from Mexico has seen similar things. We see these connections, so it is hard for me to see why people can’t see the meaning behind this movement and choose to rely on technicalities.
* Charlie: It is critical to understand that a two state solution is the only way to achieve peace. NUDivest and BDS contradict this. The complete success of BDS requires the dissolution of Israel. Boycotting, Divesting and imposing sanctions on Israel just pushes us farther away from peace. Both sides have blood on their hands. BDS prolongs the conflict.
* Piotr: I have been around this campus for four years. I came to NU to be a teacher. I live to support my students and it pains me that my education is complicit in my Palestinian students’ oppression. One of my mentees travelled to Palestine, but were stopped at a check point miles from their family.
* Motion to extend by 30 minutes.
* Grant: I want to take a step back and look at the long term goal of Northwestern and ASG. If the resolution creates more harm than good, you should not pass it. ASG tonight must vote on whether having NU take away its funds will fix the problem. Not only does NUDivest not find an answer to any human rights violation, it pushes people farther away. The movement impedes peace and pushes everyone away from peace.
* Dania: To all of you who are telling us to dialogue, I say your process silences us. The long arm of Israeli violence follows us past the occupation. It erases the physical and structural violence Palestinians feel every day.
* Joe: We’re here tonight to decide whether we want to severe ties with one country in the middle east. Not the country where we have a campus. I can’t convince to make the connection between this and BDS, even if it walks and talks like BDS and until an hour ago mentioned and aligned itself with BDS. We need to first call for transparency and then take specific action.
* Hagar: I am not Palestinian and would like to apologize that people are speaking on your behalf. I’m sorry you have to sit here and listen to people say what is best for you. We experience discomfort any time we bring up something controversial. To feel like your character and beliefs are questioned by this is to align yourself with oppression. Do not silence us. Do not send us back to the margins of this campus. Do not wait for the people of color to stop talking so you can go back to your comfort zone. I challenge you to listen. I challenge you to leave your comfort zone. I also recognize my own privilege.
* How does bringing up qatar help if you already say the occupation is a problem?
* Joe: I’m pointing out a double standard. By pointing out one country, the adminstration is less likely to hear.
* Jeff: I just want to share one piece of wisdom by someone who has been able to ensure peace in an area. Anwar Sadat: “there is a psychological barrier between us…”
* Christina: Divestment is an important place to start. For coal, we don’t think we’re going to stop climate change, but it’s an important step. Many Palestinians do not have access to clean running water. Caterpillar is also responsible for taking down olive trees. It is also an occupation of land and resources. Environmental injustices and human rights violations are not okay with me.
* McKayla: I would like to address a few false accusations in this resolution. South Africans do align with the Palestinians, but they do not appreciate it being called Apartheid. In Israel, minorities are guaranteed rights under the law. The Northwestern Coalition of Peace fervently opposed the occupation, but this effort emboldens extremists on both sides. With the divestment campaign for South Africa, there was a direct relationship with the South African government, which is lacking in Israel. All this allows is for ASG to absolve itself from its responsibility for peace.
* Isabel: I am here to tell my story because it is left out. I have family in Israel and if I thought this put their lives in danger, I would not support this. My jewish family knows what it is like to be marginalized, which makes me even more passionate about this. Times are too desperate to wait around and talk about peace. Senators, you have the chance to make history today.
* Motion to extend by 30 minutes.
* Ariella: NUDIvest has asked for support in the name of human rights. I do not want to oppose my fellow students, but I feel like I need to. The Coalition for Peace thinks a two state solution is the best way to find peace. I can’t support NUDivest because of its connection with BDS. We need partners and storytelling.
* Eric: I want to address some of the arguments the opposition has made. First, I’d say that this is not mutually exclusive with challenging other oppressive regimes. Second, investment is already taking a side. If you don’t like taking a side, support divestment. Dialogue has been the status quo for decades, because Israel has the whole power. That’s decades of inaction. They want a slow process, but what we have right now is no process. We need divestment to shake things up. Dialogue means dialogue for a very specific group of people right now.
* Meredith: I am worried our campus is divided beyond repair. We need to wipe the slate clean and start over. Voting no does not mean you support or oppose any part of this resolution. It could mean multiple things.
* Petros: I am not Palestinian and I can’t speak for Palestinian students, because they can and should speak for themselves. As a gay man at NU, the queer community has often been dehumanized. These corporate actions still don’t compare to the action against Palestinians.
* Will: It is a discussion about human rights, but this is really about vilifying companies. Lockheed Martin makes weapons, but it also makes defense systems. I don’t want to endanger our soldiers.
* Sarah: I am a lesbian, but my struggles are not the same. Israel is the only country in the middle east that supports queer people.
* Nora: Hatred becomes internalized if people stay complicit. I support the divestment.
* Eric: Israel consistently denies amnesty to queer palestinians and have blackmailed queer palestinians saying they would out them if they do not conform. Queer rights for whom?
* Josh: I come to this issue because of my upbringing and experience. I learned about the power of activism and felt the moral obligation. There is an occupation and it is happening in my name. That what brings me to the coalition for peace. Activists have historically disagreed and I think the conversation we are having is missing that point. This should not be a conversation about Israel vs. Palestine, but about different forms of activism. Campaigns like this gives us a false yes or no.
* Noah: Can you walk me through divestment makes your activism difficult? And what is your form of activism?
* Josh: I think a lot of that has said already, but I want to lift up what Jacqueline said. The only substantial impact of this resolution would be to lend credibility to the BDS movement. We need to have an honest conversation about what this resolution is. It’s not about funding the occupation, but rather is this an action that would help end the occupation. We need to look at the root of the issue. It’s not that we don’t have a two state solution yet because it is impossible, but because we have gotten super close but haven’t quite gotten there, because the political will isn’t quite there. Our analysis is that the one state implications of the BDS movement, it does not move political will in the way that we want.
* Lauren: How does BDS lend itself to a one state solution?
* Josh: My primary work is not about BDS. It is about ending the occupation. The calls of BDS and the movement’s goals are inconsistent with the actualizations of the issue. I don’t want to overgeneralize, I understand that there isn’t a president. My problem is they don’t make a large enough distinction between the occupation and Israel.
* -:I’d like to commend the Plex-Seabury senator for asking members to vote. I would have appreciated something similar in my residence hall. What side is more political? Removing our investment is neutral. Our responsibility is to critically analyze our complicity in this.
* -: For those who are liberally blabbing about dialogue, where were you when Northwestern students were harassed for standing up and for their race and culture? I have seen predominantly privileged communities talking about dialogue.
* Motion to vote.
* Objections.
* Motion to recess. 8 minutes.
* Motion to limit debate to 11:30.
* Motion withdrawn.
* Motion to limit debate to 11:45.
* Wendy: I think this is one of the few spaces where we have both sides. I think it’s beneficial for senators who are trying to decide what to vote.
* Amy: I think we’ve reached the point where things are redundant.
* Moira: I don’t think both sides are redundant. I think we all expected this to take a long time. A lot of students have poured a lot of their time and energy into this campaign and to limit the amount people get to talk, I think that is disrespectful.
* Motion withdrawn.
* Olivia: How would you address concerns of anti-semitism if this were to pass?
* Noah: I don’t think that was a response to the resolution. That person already was anti-semitic. This resolution does not make them anti-semitic.
* Rachel: I think we are all here because we care deeply about the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians. The only means to be able to do this is through a two state solution. There is no disagreement that NU should align itself with human rights, but is misrepresentative to frame BDS as the only way to achieve human rights. We ask that you Senators are not swayed by this rhetoric of human rights. Relieving Palestinian suffering should not mean shifting suffering to Israelis. It is deceptive and manipulative.
* Anisa: I come from an African American father and a half Palestinian half Dominican mother. I have heard their stories and witnessed the activism of my extended family. My cousin’s poetry has touched people. I remember my mother’s pride when I was accepted into Northwestern. I do not want her pride to end because the university is complicit.
* Jacob: This resolution has been characterized as making Northwestern neutral. I think it is very clear that this is a very one sided resolution. Will this actually bring peace? Peace is the only way justice will be achieved. You have to have trust on both sides if you are ever going to solve a conflict. Israel has legitimate fear of countries and while at Northwestern we can’t bolster trust, we could lessen it with this resolution.
* Dania: My family has been oppressed for 67 years. My family’s village no longer exists, but the idea still does. My father has been banned from returning since he was 18 for protesting. I had a gun pointed at me when I was 8 at a checkpoint when I tried to get to my mother’s house. At least stop silencing my Palestinian voice.
* Tina: We have discussed why the two state solution is the only solution and now I am going to speak to why BDS hurts that. BDS makes no distinction between the settlements and Israel. This resolution is not in line with self-determination.
* Motion to extend by 30 minutes.
* Amar: I am Palestinian. My family is from the West Bank, but it could be worse, we could have settled in the 40% of the land that has been destroyed. Why should Goliath look to help David when he could benefit himself? Our movement is a way to hold these firms accountable and reach a state where we can have peace talks. If you are anti-divest don’t speak for the Palestinians.
* Nathan: My time in Israel confirmed my thought that the occupation needs to end. I was saddened by the nostalgia people had of peace, memory of something that was not coming. The reason for their sadness was extremism has ruined the possibility of peace. This resolution is connected to BDS, which is not the way to peace.
* Cynthia: I am speaking as a Chicana student in support of this resolution. This is for my Palestinian brothers and sisters - I love you even if Northwestern doesn’t. This is about our survival, not just campus politics. To the students who get mad about our solidarity, you also appropriate us. You say we’re divisive, but we build bridges.
* Nathaniel: The language of human rights is often used to manipulate. There are historical examples that serve as a reminder to analyze a situation before jumping in. The opposition wants to win a symbolic victory, but who would it be a victory for? It would be a victory for BDS, not Palestinians. Their act of placing the entire blame on Israel is not conducive to peace. As Israel and Jordan have proved, working around common interests can lead to peace.
* Motion to previous question.
* Objection.
* Alec: After conversations with some people, the general consensus is people pretty much know how they’re going to vote. We want to hear everyone, but it’s not constructive to continue to sit here when we know how to vote.
* Noah: What we’re talking about right now is not just about how Senators are voting. This is a space where people who are marginalized can speak. To previous question does a disservice to them and to yourself.
* Tom: as a sub in senator, that kind of logic is against the antithesis of what you should be doing. This is unprecedented and we need to continue this dialogue.
* Nehaarika: While Senate and this democratic speech is valuable, it is not the best place for dialogue. This is about a vote and our purpose is to make a decision.
* Ronak: Saying you are ready to vote when you’re not all directly elected is insulting.
* The motion fails.
* Angel: Before coming to NU I could not have pointed out occupied Palestine on a map. I left my dorm room this morning and will be able to get back. I cannot say that about my undocumented friend. I cannot choose to answer the Palestinian call, but I must. I’d like to cede the rest of my time to a moment of silence.
* Jonathan: Do you consider Israel to be the homeland of the jewish people?
* Angel: I don’t know,
* Jake: What would your thoughts be on a resolution on something against Elbit systems in general.
* Angel: You fuck with one you fuck with them all.
* -: We’ve heard a lot of painful experiences but not to Israelis. My sister, my triplet sister will call me every day, crying about rockets falling. I would chalk it up to war and then one time she called me about her fiancee and how he was missing. He ended up being alive, but only because he wasn’t quite close enough. I do not want to marginalize everyone, but to show that pain is felt by more than one side. This resolution only speaks to one person’s pain.
* Aman: Justice would look like me. I’m from the Gaza strip. We did not ethnically cleanse an area and then claim it as ours. I’m not opposed to the idea of judaism, but I am for equality for everyone. 2200 Palestinians were killed in the Gaza strip this summer. I lost six family members this family. My cousin was killed with 6 american made bullets. 40% of my home town was completely demolished. I can go into detail about the terror and all the things that could lead to me being a monster, but I am telling you to please divest.
* Jake: I am not against human rights. I don’t think anyone in here is. Divestment will not lead to peace. The only thing that will lead to a solution is two states.
* Motion to extend debate by half an hour.
* NUCHR: We support NUDivest and to eliminate Northwestern’s complicity. We see it as our duty to know where our money is going. We think the movement presents us with a critical choice. We are not a single issue organization. We bring together delegates from all over the country. We understand that human rights are nuanced, but we cannot ignore the fact that Palestinians’ rights have been violated. Discussing human rights in Palestine is not exclusive and co-opting another place’s human rights violations to limit the rights of another group is wrong.
* Corey: Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions are not the endgame, but they are strategies to another goal. I used to believe that divestment could be divorced from the political reformation, but the more we claim it is a simple solution, the more self-centered we get. The treatment of Palestinians is awful, but this resolution does not have a satisfactory description of what divestment would do. BDS does do this well, but NUDivest has distanced themselves from them.
* Bria: Colonialism is not dead, but people are dying at the hands of colonialism. It shouldn’t take travelling abroad, spending thousands of dollars, to understand that. Colonialism is not dead, but it has gotten very good at camouflaging itself. Oppression has made consumption it’s fuel. Our affiliation with systems that consume is more than just complicit, it is fueling the problem. To not divest would be enabling the continuation of action. We are here today with so much passion, because we are refusing to remain seated at oppression’s table.
* Nicholas: The authors say this is a human rights campaign, but we all know it isn’t.
* Will: Just to quickly address the colonialism argument, I think it is offensive. The jews did not come from Europe to oppress the Palestinians. They came from countries where they were kicked out.
* Aman: There is a law in the Israeli institution to arrest people of color for no reason. What about the demonstrations against people of color. I don’t know what you’re talking about. Israel makes money off of racism, similar to this country. Thank god to the people who invented socialism to share these things better. You know what’s worse than colony? Supporting colony. I am frustrated that there are people who can support this. Get on the right side of justice!
* Motion to vote.
* Objection.
* Shannon: I think we have all determined a side. It is great to have another opinion added to the collection. Our ultimate purpose is to come to a decision and I think the Senate body has come to a place.
* Moira: Our responsibility is to come to a decision with all the facts. It is not harmful to stay here longer and listen to people. I don’t think there is a good argument for why we need to vote right now. We could vote right now but we do not need to. There are facts left to hear. I know people are waiting to hear. There are arguments you haven’t heard yet.
* Jonathan: We’ve been here for five hours and this debate is no longer about the debate anymore. The speaker who just spoke, I wanted to ask him about whether he though Israel has the right to exist and I shouldn’t have to ask that question.
* Ronak: First and foremost, our job is to be representatives of our constituents . we need to give them a voice.
* Alec: I definitely acknowledge that giving people a place to share their beliefs is valuable, but I think it is not respectful to everyone’s time if people already know how they are going to vote. I asked again, is anyone undecided? Because please speak up.
* Marcel: By going to a vote now, you are saying future speakers don’t matter and it marginalizes their votes.
* Ruba: I also want to say, I want you to shift your focus away from us and onto other people.
* Motion fails.
* Ross: If this passes, no solution will be offered but a message will be sent. While Israel is far from perfect, everyone has full legal rights in Israel. As a progressive liberal, I have a problem singling out the only country with these rights. I would not answer a call of a people who supported this kind of a smear campaign.
* Youssef: I’d like to begin by addressing a disturbing remark from a Senator. We have no right to draft borders, but we can respond to a call and stand in solidarity. A few other Senators mentioned that the complexity makes them uncomfortable. But it is not complex enough to justify an occupation. You have chosen the side of the oppressor.
* Ruba: Motion to extend until the speakers end.
* Chandra: I admire both sides, not to appear moderate, but I truly do. The past few rounds have not been traced back to the resolution and at that point it is not influencing our decision as Senators. After those opinions aren’t influencing our decisions, I don’t think this is the right forum.
* Noah: I’m speaking in con, but I think that after two more speakers I would be in favor of PQ.
* Motion to extend by 5 minutes.
* Passes.
* Josh Boxerman: I want to start by saying thank you to everyone who has spoken, especially people who have shared their personal stories. It’s stories like those that have gotten me into the work that I’m doing now. I think this debate should not be about whether or not we should end the occupation. This is about whether we are comfortable aligning our student body with the BDS movement at large. It is not a choice between this and silence. I am not staying silent. I have been fighting on this front for year. Just last quarter, we hosted a screening of five broken screening, we held a vigil for the lives lost, etc. This is the work that we do. Our window for action on this issue is not limited to tonight
* Hassan: Our freedom is not complete without the freedom of the of the Palestinians. This bill does not take rights away, but gives them to people. I ask you to stand with unions across the world and stand with universities across the country and so many others.
* Maddie: Political action is the path to any meaningful change. The issue we have been talking about is human rights. I hope you are capable of recognizing the faults of Israel and the right to a jewish state. The answer to this is not divestment. If you believe if the Palestinian people have as much of a right as Israelis, which I think we should all be able to get behind, then you must acknowledge that this is a geopolitical issue.
* Motion to amend.
* Motion for one minute recess
* Motion to add “but does not reflect an endorsement of the BDS ideologies beyond the scope of the resolution;” and motion to strike “**Whereas,**  passage of this resolution constitutes a response to the divestment component of the call;”
* Daniel: Does the passage of this resolution to the support of BDS? While we cannot control the slant of extremist publications, but we can include clarifying language.
* Noah: We just need two more speakers to PQ. This will cause too much debate.
* Motion to PQ.
* Move to a vote.
* The amendment fails.
* Motion to extend by four speakers.
* Passes.
* Julia: I will only speak to my experience as someone who has always thought about where I fit in at Northwestern. We need to address the elephant in the room, which is the difference of institutional privilege between the two groups.
* Sophia: There is really only one side, which is the truth. Academics is important, but not just poli sci classes, classes that are about social inequalities. (lots of stuff I missed, sorry!)
* Ruba: Can you elaborate on the South Africa win?
* Sofia: 30-1, not full divestment but eventually. This is about long term goals, which ASG has always been about.
* Jonathan: Do you consider Jewish students to be a minority right now who felt oppression?
* Sofia: I think you need to look at the difference between suffering at the center or on the margin. The two are not comparable. There are times when people do need to be uncomfortable and disrupted.
* Rocio: I am speaking on behalf of Sarah Torres. I would like to say that I find this space a bit scary and I don’t know how we are going to function after this when there is a huge dichotomy here. Many people are feeling silenced here. If we want to have a discussion about human rights, it should be about for everyone. To Sarah’s points. I disagree with the members of the queer community who are relating their experiences to the Palestinians . The leadership in Palestine imprison and kill queer people.
* Stephanie: I a woman of color am ceding one minute to this white man standing next to me, because his opinion will be taken more seriously than mine. Silence is violent, it exonerates our complicity in human rights violations. Nu cannot operate on silence. There is no safety in fear. The violence of imperialism must be challenged by responding to the calls of the indigenous populations.
* Erik: There is a strong discourse against NUDivest. i know as a white male I am considered more seriously. How are people shaping the discourse. When we were saying we have a fear of being aligned with BDS, that’s similar to saying gay marriage will ruin families. When we are voting on this resolution it is not just Israel or Palestine. It is about how Northwestern responds to oppression. It is the same argument in different shapes.
* Joe: Before I go everyone, I want to genuinely thank you for the opportunity to hear these stories. There might be an amendment following this and removing BDS from this. If you are at all uncomfortable about BDS, stay uncomfortable. No matter what amendments you add. We don’t want to be invested in these companies, but if you phrase it targeting only one issue, you are guaranteeing the administration will not heed your call. It may feel good today and tomorrow and you may feel like you ended your complicity, but there is no future. We have to first get transparency and then we can tackle individual issues.
* Petros: Motion to enter testimony from unheard individuals into the journal.
* No objections.
* We will now move into a secret ballot.
* The motion passes. 24-22-3.

Speeches that were not said, but were motioned to be added to the journal:

From Melisa Stephen:

“Hi, my name is Melisa Stephen. I'm a senior and off-campus senator, and I support NU Divest. I specifically want to talk from a perspective of feminist and queer activism and call out Sara Torres and other members of the opposition who have shown us some terrific examples of pink washing Israel in their speeches tonight.

“Pink washing” refers to how Israel has attempted to rebrand itself as a haven for queer and trans people in order to distract from its notorious reputation of human rights abuses. Legal reform concerning same-sex marriage and LGBT military service is glorified in order to present Israel as a modern democratic beacon of human rights, which we all know is not true. In its blatant disregard for Palestinian life, Israel certainly makes no exceptions for queer and trans Palestinians. There is no special pink route that allows queer Palestinians to escape the long wait and daily humiliation of checkpoints. Israel’s co-opting of the struggle for queer liberation to service their settler colonial agenda is A) insulting in that it weaponizes queerness and transness in its logics of oppression B) a form of epistemic violence in its projection of a consolidated Western definition of queerness and inherent othering of Palestinians. There are ways of being queer citizens that do not involve the visibility and rights-based politics of the mainstream LGBT movements of the West. Pink washing discourse seeks to convince Westerners like you that supporting Israel is an imperative for “modern,” “progressive” women, LGBTQ folks, and their allies, and its success relies on the **racism and Islamophobia** alive in those circles and apparently in this very room tonight.

Pink washing serves the homonational project of gender and sexual exceptionalism that normalizes Israeli apartheid. Liberal rights granted to some does not justify Israeli state violence which oppresses ALL Palestinians—women, men, non-binary, trans, queer and straight alike. The illegal occupation only amplifies forms of sexual and gender oppression, and we cannot continue to misrepresent the situation by talking about sexual and gender liberation in isolation from the broader political context. What is happening in occupied Palestine is neither an extension NOR A DEFENSE of liberal democracy. If we are to be comprehensive in our activism around feminist, queer, and trans liberation, we must necessarily unite against such forms of racism and resist the colonial projects that generate them. Queer and trans Palestinians do not need or want you to play white savior and make political decisions for them OR JUDGMENTS ABOUT THEM from your ivory tower thousands of miles away. They need your solidarity, which you can easily give by supporting this resolution. Please, please, please vote yes to divest.”

From Moira Geary:

I’m Moira Geary, and I am the senator for the social justice coalition. As the representative of a community that fights for many different but connected social justice issues, I think we have a responsibility to take into account the actions that have come before us and the history that has been made on this campus by activists also working to end human rights abuses through divestment. There have been three divestment resolutions brought before ASG in its history, all of which have passed, but I want to focus on the first, which was the resolution to divest from companies involved in South African Apartheid in 1978. Many years after the fall of Apartheid, history has changed the narrative of how the international community accepted Apartheid, and how it was really brought down. I’m sure many people in this room have the idea that divesting from human rights abuses in South Africa was undebatable and unanimously agreed upon at the time, and that touching the issue of Israel and Palestine now is completely different. But many argued against divestment from Apartheid as well, and in the end grassroots movements to divest, boycott, and sanction ultimately had a huge effect on bringing equal rights for black South Africans. I am going to read an excerpt from a 1989 article arguing that Apartheid South Africa should not be singled out:

“WHILE the violation of human rights is the norm rather than the exception in most of Africa's 42 black-ruled states, the spotlight remains on South Africa. The images of racism, white supremacy, Nazism, etc. are a most effective part of a campaign to play on white guilt and to condition hatred for South Africa. While it is true that there are many things wrong in South Africa, the facts are sensationalized and distorted. A cheap political campaign to get black and also well-meaning (though not as well-informed) white liberal votes, is being run by using the white “racist regime” in Pretoria as a unifying issue. Contrary to popular belief, the whites did not take the country from the blacks. When the Dutch settled in the Cape in 1652, they found a barren, largely unpopulated land. Together with French and German settlers, they built a dynamic society.”

30 years from now, which side of history do we want ourselves, and Northwestern, to be standing on?

From APAC:

"The Asian Pacific American Coalition echoes NUDivest in calling for the severance of Northwestern's financial ties with corporations that profit from the oppression of the Palestinian people. Inaction is complicity, and the continued financial involvement with such corporations would further implicate our university in systems which work to oppress people around the world and on our own campus."

From Amina Dressen:

“With their use of the hashtag “daily dialogue” and stated commitment to “investing in dialogue,” opponents of NU Divest have attempted to claim dialogue as something that they value and NU Divest does not. As Director of Community Engagement for Sustained Dialogue on campus, I object to this claim. The kind of dialogue that opponents of NU Divest stand for is a false dialogue without action, a peace without justice. Without recognition of power inequalities and a commitment to action, dialogue becomes a tool with which to maintain oppression rather than to push for justice. When “NU Coalition for Peace” asks us to engage in dialogue, we must ask ourselves what the purpose of this dialogue is. If the purpose of dialogue is to maintain an oppressive status quo, then it is not a dialogue that I want to be a part of. True dialogue is a tool for greater understanding that allows us to create a more just society and end oppression. This is the kind of dialogue that NU Divest has promoted by reaching out to people all across campus to educate us about where our money is going, and to push to end our complicity in the oppression of the Palestinian people. This is dialogue for social justice, and this is the kind of dialogue that we must support by passing this resolution.

Thank you,

Amina Dreessen”