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## NEWS

# Campus groups react after Resources Committee rejects dissociation proposal



A Princeton Israel Apartheid Divest (PIAD) protest in September.

Calvin Grover / The Daily Princetonian

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The Resources Committee of the Council of the Princeton University Community (CPUC) **announced** on Wednesday that a **proposal** for the University to cut financial ties with entities implicated in “Israel’s illegal occupations, apartheid practices, and plausible acts of genocide” will not move forward, citing a lack of campus

consensus.

Student advocates across campus reacted to the decision with frustration, disappointment, and support. But one sentiment they did not express was consensus — about the issue, about the Committee's decision, or even about the process behind it.

This decision follows months of advocacy and discussion by students on all sides of the issue. Student organizations across campus have weighed in on the divestment proposal since Princeton Israel Apartheid Divest (PIAD) **submitted** it in June 2024.

The CPUC committee determined that the proposal did not meet the three criteria for divestment: sustained conversation on campus, a connection to Princeton values, and campus consensus.

In conversations with The Daily Princetonian, Tigers for Israel (TFI) and J Street U agreed that a campus consensus has not been reached and spoke in support of the Resources Committee's decision. Various pro-Palestine and pro-divestment organizations, however, expressed concerns about alleged University links to violence in the region and dissatisfaction with the lack of transparency about the behind-the-scenes decision-making.

"We are angry that the Resources Committee has disregarded Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people," postdoctoral researcher Jessica Ng wrote in a statement to the 'Prince' on behalf of PIAD. "We are disturbed by the blatant lack of evidence provided in the Resource Committee's response. We are left to question their claim of lack of consensus, and the requirement for consensus on Israel's incredibly well-documented violations of human rights and international law in the first place." The Committee declined to provide record of community submissions, citing confidentiality promises.

The **process** through which change occurs has been a point of contention since the initial negotiations of protester demands **during** the Gaza Solidarity Encampment. In May, protestors **met** with the administration to discuss and negotiate their demands following a **nine-day** hunger strike.

In an **email** sent to the student body in May, University President Christopher Eisgruber '83 said that the University would "consider [the protestors] concerns through appropriate processes that respect the interests of multiple parties and viewpoints."

Tal Naider '28, who had been in Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, the day Hamas launched its **attack** on Israel, expressed agreement with the Resources Committee's decision.

"As someone who was there last year and survived the terrorist attack, I definitely feel as though, while people have a lot of strong opinions on this issue, not all of them, while they do come from places of caring, come from places of having information," Naider said.

Naider added that while the PIAD proposal to divest might have come from wanting to limit violence, it was ultimately impractical considering the geopolitical situation of Israel.

"You're talking about a country that needs to fight to protect itself and its existence," Naider said. "Israel is situated next to neighbors which do not want it there ... As much as we, as outsiders, want a two-state solution, people there on both sides don't really want that."



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Other students were clearly disappointed.

"I view the CPUC's 'findings' as part of a larger campaign of repression, in which Princeton is using vague and arbitrary bureaucratic procedures to silence dissent and inflict unprecedented sanctions against nonviolent protest — all in service of a foreign military that is actively exterminating an occupied population," PIAD organizer Sofia Menemenlis GS wrote to the 'Prince'.

Elena Eiss '28, on behalf of the Alliance of Jewish Progressives (AJP), said that AJP is overall "not surprised, just disappointed."

"With this very limited way to interact with the committee asking for student opinion, and having no idea whether those opinions are being read — it doesn't really build a lot of trust among students and their university," Eiss said.

John T. Groves, Chairman of the Resources Committee, wrote in a piece in the 'Prince' announcing the decision that comments from the community input process were not "tabulated," and wrote it was "plainly evident from the comments and materials submitted to our committee that there are multiple, divergent, and strongly held views in our community about the topics raised in the dissociation petition." The committee received more than 2,000 emails and other correspondence as well as 2,300 responses in an online feedback form.

Maddy Denker '27, membership chair for J Street U, expressed that the organization is in agreement with the CPUC regarding the lack of campus consensus on the issue. J Street, a national organization, has an **anti-Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)** policy. Denker noted that the organization believes that BDS "doesn't allow us to engage with stakeholders on both sides of the conflicts."

"We agree that there doesn't seem to be a campus consensus on this issue, because of the people that we've engaged with," Denker told the 'Prince.' "The decision seems to emulate what we at J Street are noticing, which is that students are really engaged in this conversation. We want to be a campus where students stay engaged and are talking about this issue because it's really critically important, but there really isn't a consensus on how the University should move forward, and so we think they've made the right decision."

Eiss noted that the Research Committee determined there was not a "sustained campus dialogue" to satisfy the first criterion when the first petition was proposed in 2014. The 2024 petition, however, did meet this requirement.

"At least we've gotten somewhere. We've moved forward," Eiss said. "So we can only hope that as we move forward, we can meet that third prong," referring to the criteria for campus consensus.

Max Meyer '27, President of TFI, wrote in a statement to the 'Prince' that TFI worked to ensure the University knew there was no consensus on the matter of divestment, citing the Resources Committee's **criterion** for campus-wide consensus.

In reference to the decision itself, Meyer stated, "I see the rejection as a resounding indictment of those who claim that there exists an anti-Israel consensus in the broader Princeton community."

Many of these groups will be looking at how to engage in continued conversation after spring break.

Sophie Miller '27, advocacy chair for J Street, told the 'Prince,' "we look forward to having more discussions around how we want to move forward in terms of what goes on after break on campus and how we want to engage, or choose to engage, or not engage."

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