

An ADL Guide to “Israeli Apartheid Week”

Overview

Antisemitism on campus has been a longstanding problem, but in the aftermath of the October 7th terrorist attacks, it has become a crisis. Instead of rallying around victims of terror, condemning Hamas, supporting Jewish students and engaging in healthy debate across differences many campuses are brimming with anti-Israel fervor that has far too frequently crossed the line into overt antisemitism.

Given the volatile situation on campus and the historic rise in antisemitic incidents, many Jewish students are bracing for “Israeli Apartheid Week” (IAW) – a series of radical anti-Zionist events organized each year by the [Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions \(BDS\) Movement](#) that are often marked by inflammatory rhetoric, intimidation and harassment of Jewish students, Jewish faculty, and Jewish organizations. Anti-Zionism is antisemitism, because it denies Jewish indigeneity, erases Jewish history and denies our right to self-determination.

While IAW events typically last one week, this year IAW is scheduled to take place for the entire month of March. In the wake of the October 7th attacks, the theme is “March for Palestine: Stop the [Genocide](#), End Apartheid,” and organizers are calling for “the dismantling of Israel’s [settler-colonial](#) apartheid regime.” Given this framing, the anticipated duration of IAW, and against the backdrop of spiraling antisemitism on campus, this year’s events are expected to only further fuel a hostile environment for Jewish students and Jewish faculty on campus.

ADL recently launched the Not On My Campus Campaign to call on college and university leaders to commit to No Tolerance for Antisemitism on their campuses. During IAW, it is critical that campus administrators prioritize the safety and wellbeing of Jewish students who are at an increased risk of experiencing hostility, harassment and other forms of harm.

Please find a brief FAQ and resources below to ensure that Jewish students, their families and allies have the tools they need to protect themselves and, when appropriate, demand university action.

We look forward to continuing to support you in this work.

FAQs

What is IAW?

- Since its inception in 2005, Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) has become one of the most well-known and virulent anti-Israel programs.
- In dozens of cities around the world each year, anti-Israel activists plan a week-long series of events, usually in March, that are marked by allegations that Israel is an “apartheid state.”
- Campuses are often the focal points for IAW, but anti-Israel activists in the broader community also hold events.
- This year’s IAW lauds anti-Israel demonstrations and civil disobedience and declares: “This IAW let’s not just educate about Israeli apartheid! Let’s escalate BDS campaigning in all fields and take meaningful

steps towards supporting the ongoing Palestinian struggle to dismantle it.”

- Some IAW events fuel harassment and intimidation of Jewish students, faculty and institutions.

What can I expect to see on my campus?

- Typically, IAW consists of lectures, films, cultural performances, demonstrations, efforts to co-opt other popular causes, and advocacy in favor of BDS. This may include anti-Israel demonstrations containing inflammatory rhetoric and mock “apartheid wall” displays, occasionally disrupting events and campus life.
- Due to the announced theme this year, “March for Palestine: Stop the Genocide, End Apartheid,” it is expected that there will be many accusations that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza.
- There will likely be rhetoric that expresses support for terror against Israel, vilifies Zionists and Zionism, and even draws comparisons between what is happening in Gaza and the Holocaust. ADL has documented a considerable amount of such rhetoric since October 7th.

What can I do if I feel unsafe on campus?

- If you think you have witnessed or been a victim of an antisemitic incident, please report to campus law enforcement and to ADL: <https://www.adl.org/report-antisemitic-bias-or-discriminatory-incident>
- If you think your legal rights have been violated, and you are interested in exploring legal action, please contact the [Campus Antisemitism Legal Line \(CALL\)](#) to report incidents of antisemitic discrimination, intimidation, harassment, vandalism, or violence.
- If you believe you are in physical danger, call 911.

How can I safely take action to counteract anti-Israel and antisemitic activity during IAW?

- ADL has created the [Not On My Campus Action HUB](#) to provide parents, alumni and students with easy ways to safely engage in advocacy.
- We do not encourage direct engagement with IAW events and demonstrations.
- Bear in mind that criticism of Israel, including harsh language, is usually First Amendment-protected speech. Action that is taken to counteract IAW should respect this.

Responding to IAW Allegations

The below resources can help you combat IAW’s falsehoods, mischaracterizations and outright lies as conversations arise on campus.

- [Questions, Complexities and Context: Insights into Israel and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#)
- [Backgrounder re: Hamas](#)
- [Anti-Israel Activism on U.S. Campuses, 2022-2023](#)

- [Israeli Apartheid Week \(IAW\) 2023 Featured Expressions of Antisemitism](#)
- Please note in particular these resources to help you combat extreme rhetoric and false allegations:
 - [Allegation: Israel is an Apartheid State"](#)
 - [Allegation: Israel is Guilty of "Pinkwashing" \(and Other Washing\) to Cover Up Actions Against Palestinians](#)
 - [Allegation: Israel Commits Acts of Genocide](#)
 - [Allegation: Israel is a Settler Colonialist Enterprise](#)
 - [Slogan: "From the River to the Sea Palestine Will be Free"](#)
 - [Allegation: To gain justice for the Palestinians, we must "dismantle Zionism."](#)
 - [Think.Plan.Act.](#) – ADL's comprehensive toolkit for dealing with antisemitic and anti-Israel incidents on campus

Recommendations for Taking Action

There are several ways that you can take action to counter anti-Israel and antisemitic activity on campus during IAW:

1. [Report incidents](#) of antisemitism or hate to ADL. [Use the CALL website](#) or text "CALLhelp" to 51555 to have a lawyer review campus-based incidents of antisemitic discrimination, intimidation, harassment, vandalism or violence.
2. Write a letter to your campus president and express concern regarding IAW and antisemitism on campus. A sample letter can be found [here](#).
3. Use the month of March to engage in proactive advocacy on campus for more systemic policy changes. Advocacy could include organizing other students to write letters or sign a petition, or asking to meeting with campus leaders. A list of asks that you can make of your campus president can be found [here](#).
4. Write a letter to the editor of your campus newspaper to raise awareness regarding the harm often caused by IAW activity. Tips can be found [here](#).
5. Write an op-ed for your campus newspaper regarding misinformation and disinformation circulating on campus as a result of IAW. More guidance can be found [here](#).
6. Promote opportunities on campus that allow for meaningful dialogue and academic inquiry regarding the Israel-Hamas war and longstanding conflict. Learn more [here](#).
7. Share resources with your network on social media. Learn more [here](#).
8. Join ADL in urging your U.S. Senators to require universities to provide resources for students to report potential civil rights violations and get the support they need. Learn more [here](#).