

**Human Rights Violations in University Investments and Police Forces**

**AUTHOR(S):** Buthaina Hattab

**SPONSOR(S):** Senator Sofia Sinnokrot, Senator Creen Ahmad, Senator Abigael Fogarty, Senator Enoma Egiebor, Senator Yousuf Ahmad, Senator Michael Van Wagner,

**ENDORSEMENT(S):** Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), Underrepresented Muslim and Minority Advoactes (UMMA), Muslim Students Association (MSA), Arab Student Association (ASA), Illini Democrats, Illinois Coalition Assisting Undocumented Students Education (I-CAUSE), Students for Environmental Concerns (SECS),

**WHEREAS,** The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign’s Diversity Statement is to “Enhance, develop, and maintain structures and services committed to diversity” and “Respect spaces that allow for the support and development of specific identities and communities;”<sup>1</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign claims as our shared vision a wish to be “the pre-eminent public research university with a land-grant mission and global impact” while the University of Illinois disproportionately allocates funds to the University PD and invests millions in companies that directly profit from human rights abuses and violations of international law; and,

**WHEREAS,** the Illinois Student Government has identified a commitment to “advance the collective interest and safeguarding the rights of the students...and provide for the awareness and general welfare of the campus and community;”<sup>2</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination<sup>3</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** As an institution that promotes the idea of bettering diversity and inclusivity, UIUC must dedicate itself to ethical conduct in its police forces and investment practices by divesting from companies that profit from and contribute to human rights violations locally and other communities globally; and,

---

[1] [UIUC Diversity Statement](#)

[2] [ISG Mission](#)

[3] UN definition of [Human Rights](#)

**WHEREAS,** UIUC's investment in companies involved in human rights violations and violations of international law, including the confiscation and destruction of Palestinian lands, criminalization of immigrants and communities of color, and environmental racism, make UIUC complicit in these crimes; and,

**WHEREAS,** The University cannot advocate for diversity and inclusion while investing in unethical companies and police forces; and,

**WHEREAS,** A budget and investments are moral statements of priorities to this institution; and,

**WHEREAS,** The morals and priorities of UIUC reside in their investments in fossil fuels, the prison industrial complex, the military-industrial complex, the Israeli occupation, and police departments; and,

**WHEREAS,** The consequences of these actions affect the UIUC community directly, including students whose families experience occupation, systemic discrimination, environmental racism, and other forms of human rights violations; and,

**WHEREAS,** UIUC has a direct responsibility to students to stop funding and/or maintaining partial ownership in such companies and departments; and,

**WHEREAS,** UIUC has spent over \$8 million on "Division of Public Safety" and Police Training Institute expenditures and \$20,000 on the Counseling Center<sup>4</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** These calls for divestment stem from recent abuses by University and local police forces in Urbana-Champaign; and,

**WHEREAS,** On May 31, 2020, Champaign police deployed teargas on protesters and mourners (including campus members and young people from the community) assembling against police violence, and three Champaign police officers used excessive force to pin down and restrain a young protestor, a man of color; and,

**WHEREAS,** On April 10, 2020, in the second-most recent incident of police violence against Black community members, Urbana police tackled and beat an unarmed Black woman<sup>5</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The ongoing investigation of University police officer Jerald E. Sandage for sexual assault, sexual abuse, and intimidation, for conduct, allegedly occurring between 2012-2018<sup>6</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** During 2017 Homecoming weekend, the University police protected the Chief Illiniwek reenactor and his supporters while anti-racist student protesters were harassed and struck by Chancellor Jones' car in the parade<sup>7</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** In December 2016, University police interfered with classes in order to interrogate Black students<sup>8</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** On November 16, 2016, Champaign police tackled and killed an unarmed Black houseless man, Richard Turner, but were never charged<sup>9</sup>; and,

---

[4] [Budget Summary FY2020](#)

[5] [April 2020 Champaign Police](#)

[6] [Jerald E. Sandage](#)

[7] [Homecoming parade 2017](#)

[8] [Champaign Police interrupt classes](#)

[9] [Richard Turner](#)

**WHEREAS,** On October 9, 2009, a Champaign police officer shot and killed unarmed Black teenager Kiwane Carrington<sup>10</sup>. The offending officer was never charged, maintained employment with the CPD for years, and received more than \$400,000 in compensation following Carrington's death; and,

**WHEREAS,** Patriot missiles by Raytheon and Lockheed Martin were manufactured by prisoners in private prisons working for 23 cents an hour<sup>11</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Aramark is a US-based company that provides food and other logistical services to prisons and uses prison labor<sup>12</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Aramark has committed severe health and safety violations<sup>13, 14</sup> in US prisons which led to prison riots and protests by inmates<sup>15 16</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Aramark was sued for involuntary servitude by eight people incarcerated at the Santa Rita Jail in California, where they prepared and packaged more than 16,000 meals a day. They were forced to do this work "under threat of punitive measures by their jailers" and receive no pay<sup>17</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Elbit Systems Ltd. is an international defense and electronics company, and is one of the largest suppliers of weapons and surveillance systems globally.<sup>18</sup> Elbit is a main supplier of surveillance technology for the separation wall in the occupied West Bank, a wall which the International Court of Justice has called a violation of human rights;<sup>19</sup>

**WHEREAS,** Elbit is the main supplier of surveillance systems to track and criminalize immigrants and border communities along the US-Mexico border;<sup>20 21</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** Elbit has supplied the Brazilian, Chilean, and Honduran military forces against civilian protests of governmental corruption and surveillance of indigenous communities<sup>18</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Northrop Grumman is a U.S. based defense technology company that develops and manufactures manned aircraft, missile systems, surveillance systems, and more<sup>22</sup>; and,

---

[10] [Kiwane Carrington](#)

[11] [Prisoners Help Build Patriot Missiles](#)

[12] [Aramark](#)

[13] [Aramark health violation](#)

[14] [Aramark prison food](#)

[15] [Prison protest](#)

[16] [Prison riot](#)

[17] [Suit Alleges That Aramark, Sheriff Profit From Inmate Labor](#)

[18] [Elbit Systems Ltd](#)

[19] [International Court of Justice finds Israeli barrier in Palestinian territory is illegal](#)

[20] [Israeli Company Elbit Systems In Charge Of Building The Wall On Mexican Border](#)

[21] [US Customs and Border Protection Certifies Elbit Systems of America's In-fill Radar and Tower System](#)

[22] [Northrop Grumman Corp](#)

**WHEREAS,** Northrop Grumman has provided weapons guidance system and missiles used in attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure, resulting in thousands of civilian casualties in Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza<sup>22</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Northrop Grumman has provided the US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement and the US Department of Homeland Security<sup>23</sup> with advanced surveillance, database, and biometric technology to profile, surveil, and monitor around 500 million unique individuals<sup>24</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Raytheon Company is a defense company that supplies the Israeli military<sup>25</sup>, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)<sup>26</sup>, the Los Angeles County Jail,<sup>27</sup> the Russian Defense Ministry<sup>28</sup>, the Chinese government<sup>29</sup>, and,

**WHEREAS,** Raytheon weaponry has been used against Palestinian and Yemeni civilians in incidents that have been condemned by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the United Nations as war crimes<sup>30</sup>, and Raytheon weaponry designed for incarceration facilities cause intense pain, skin burns, and dermal damage;<sup>31</sup> and

**WHEREAS,** Raytheon co-developed with IMI Systems guided mortars that killed 20 civilians outside of an UNRWA school in Jabaliya, Gaza, which was being used as a shelter during Operation “Protective Edge” in 2014<sup>32</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Lockheed Martin is the largest arms-producing and military service company in the world with \$51 billion in sales in 2017 that makes fighter jets, attack helicopters, and missile systems<sup>33</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Lockheed Martin’s subsidiaries have several contracts with US Customs and Border Protections, providing them with aircraft, data processing services and surveillance and communications technologies at the US-Mexico Border;<sup>33</sup> and,

**WHEREAS,** Lockheed Martin has provided the Israeli military with various weapons systems that targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure, including medics, ambulances, UN shelters, on numerous occasions in Gaza and Southern Lebanon;<sup>33 34</sup> and

**WHEREAS,** Lockheed Martin has also provided bombs to Saudi Arabia in 2018 that struck a school bus in Yemen, killing 44 children<sup>35</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Caterpillar Inc. is the world’s largest developer and manufacturer of construction and demolition equipment<sup>36</sup>; and,

---

[23] [Homeland Security](#)

[24] [DHS Expanding National Biometrics Database](#)

[25] [Fueling Conflict: Foreign arms supplies to Israel/Gaza](#)

[26] [ICE Hires Raytheon](#)

[27] Raytheon machinery in [LA County Jails](#)

[28] [Why Russia Will Be the First to Use the Pain Ray](#)

[29] [China's New Long-Range Weapon Causes Non-Lethal Pain From Afar](#)

[30] [Raytheon Co](#)

[31] [ACLU report](#) on Raytheon machinery

[32] [Israeli Arsenal Deployed Against Gaza During Operation Cast Lead](#)

[33] [Lockheed Martin Corp](#)

[34] [Lockheed Martin in Lebanon](#)

[35] [Lockheed Martin in Yemen](#)

[36] [Caterpillar Inc](#)

**WHEREAS,** Caterpillar Inc. has been warned by the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights about its sales to the IDF, pointing to their use of demolishing Palestinian villages, actions

deemed internationally illegal by the UN Security Council Resolution 2334 in 2016<sup>37 38</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Caterpillar Inc. provides Caterpillar Israel with armored excavators and D9 bulldozers<sup>36</sup> used in urban areas to destroy civilian infrastructure such as Palestinian homes, refugee camps, water cisterns, agricultural fields and build illegal Israeli settlements<sup>39</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Caterpillar Inc. has played a role in erasing the indigenous character of Palestine by clearing thousands of acres of biodiverse native habitat replacing them with non-native forests; and,

**WHEREAS,** Caterpillar Inc. aids in the massive ethnic cleansing of 40,000-70,000 of the Bedouin living in the Negev region of southern Israel. It is building parks over the ruins of Bedouin villages that would only be accessible to nearby Jewish settlements<sup>40</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** The University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign currently indirectly invests \$10 million in coal mining and utility companies and hundreds of millions more in oil and gas companies; and,

**WHEREAS,** Fossil fuels, including coal, oil and natural gas, are currently the world's primary energy source and have caused irreparable harm to the environment<sup>41</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** Fossil fuel reserves contain roughly five times the amount of carbon necessary to cause two degrees Celsius of warming, and thus 80% of these reserves must remain in the ground in order to avoid catastrophic climate disruption<sup>42</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** the IPCC has determined that climate change will threaten food and water security, increase the frequency and intensity of heat waves, storms and floods, cause wetland loss and coral reef bleaching, and result in increased fatalities from malnutrition, diarrheal diseases, and cardio-respiratory diseases<sup>43</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that climatic changes already cause more than 150,000 deaths annually<sup>44</sup>; and,

**WHEREAS,** the impacts of fossil fuel combustion will disproportionately affect lower-income communities in the US and around the world;

**WHEREAS,** Ameren, an American electrical company, left a toxic waste site in Champaign, IL, on 5th and Hill, which has created numerous health problems for Champaign residents<sup>45</sup>; and,

---

[37] [The UN vs. Caterpillar](#)

[38] [UN Security Council Resolution 2334](#)

[39] [Caterpillar: Making a Killing in Palestine](#)

[40] [JNF Blueprints the Negev](#)

[41] [Fossil Fuels](#)

[42] [Fossil fuel reserves must stay in the ground](#)

[43] [Global Warming of 1.5°C](#)

[44] [WHO on Climate Change](#)

[45] [5th and Hill](#)

**WHEREAS,** the above-mentioned companies' enable direct and consistent complicity in violations of international law and war crimes; and,

**WHEREAS,** there is a precedent for divestment in cases of a negative social impact, as The University of Illinois Board of Trustees voted to divest \$3 million worth of stock in companies operating in South Africa on January 14th, 1987, during the Apartheid era

- where South Africa was systematically oppressing and disenfranchising its Black citizens<sup>46</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS,** student councils from around the country have already voted in favor of adopting a more socially responsible policy, urging their universities to boycott or divest from corporations which are involved in human rights violations, with the number growing each year; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign administration divest from its relationship with Champaign and Urbana Police departments and from its own police force.
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that these funds be redistributed to the core missions of the university, for a robust investment in practices that can solve campus and community problems without the threat or enactment of violence; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that the University of Illinois Student Government calls upon the University of Illinois Board of Trustees to withdraw investments with holdings in companies that contribute directly, knowingly, and continuously to severe human rights violations and violations of international law; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that Chancellor Jones create a task force charged with divesting from corporations and index funds that violate human rights and reinvest in socially and environmentally responsible companies and index funds; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that this task force include, but not limited to, Associate Chancellor and Vice Provost for Budget and Resource Planning-Robert Ellinger, Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion-Sean Garrick, and at least one student representative from Students for Justice in Palestine, Students for Environmental Concerns, Graduate Employee Organization, and Black Students for Revolution; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that UIUC expands on the Environmental, Social and Governance criteria that implements a screen on ethical investments that uphold human rights for all; and,
- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that in addition to divestment, the Illinois Student Government calls upon the University of Illinois to invest and support ventures in our own community and abroad, that promote community wellbeing, human rights, and social justice, and that do not contribute to the oppression of any group; and,

---

[46][University of Illinois students gain partial divestment from apartheid South Africa](#)

- LET IT BE RESOLVED,** that the Illinois Student Government recommends that the Board of Trustees establish a university policy to examine all of its relationships with multinational corporations and dissociate itself from all companies that are involved in human rights violations; and,

**LET IT BE RESOLVED,** the University of Illinois maintains the withdrawal of investments, in accordance with trustees' fiduciary duty, until these companies are no longer in direct violation of human rights.