

## ACSRI Proposal Submission Overview

Date of Submission to the ACSRI: Sunday, December 1st, 2024

Subject of Review: Divestment from Israel and Businesses Linked to Violations of Human Rights in Occupied Palestine

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Requesting on behalf of an organization? [circle one] Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, which organization?

Provide a summary of the issue, the action requested, and the rationale:

We—an autonomous group of Columbia students, faculty and staff, alumni, and community members, mobilized and compelled by Israel's increasingly catastrophic and deadly war on Gaza—implore Columbia University to divest from Israel and complicit businesses culpably linked to the violations of human rights in occupied Palestine.

In this proposal—following ACSRI's criteria framework of broad consensus, merit, and viable divestment—we formally request that Columbia University (CU) divest from Israel and all entities that engage in, profit from, or support violations of human rights and international law in Palestine, including 1) war crimes and other crimes against humanity including the crime of genocide; 2) environmental damage; and 3) apartheid, alongside other discriminatory acts which are in violation of university principles, commitments and values (including Title VI).

Please attach in PDF format the following additional required information and supporting evidence **(20 pages max)**:

- 1) State which criteria the proposal is using to make the case (1 paragraph)
- 2) Provide all the critical data with footnotes for any arguments in your proposal
- 3) Provide research on the possible opposite argument against your conclusions
- 4) Conclusion - provide bullet points for the final recommendations to the ACSRI citing the criteria for each one

Email the proposal to the ACSRI Chair and Staff Administrator as posted on the [website](#)

Tab 1

# **Proposal on Divestment from Israel and Businesses Linked to Violations of Human Rights in Occupied Palestine**

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## **Section I: Consensus**

### **A. The Ask for Divestment**

We request that Columbia University (CU) divest from Israel and all entities that engage in, profit from, or support violations of human rights and international law in Palestine, including 1) war crimes and other crimes against humanity including the crime of genocide; 2) environmental damage; and 3) apartheid, alongside other discriminatory acts which are in violation of university principles, commitments and values (including Title VI).

### **B. Contextualizing the Ask for Divestment**

Since October 2023, all of these violations have been documented against Palestine and Palestinians. In the ensuing year, the Israeli genocide against Palestinians has further deteriorated to unacceptable levels of human suffering and death: the entire population of Gaza has experienced displacement, famine, outbreaks of polio, hepatitis, and other infections—all worsened by intentional targeting of humanitarian aid, medical services, schools, health and humanitarian workers, and journalists. Based on conservative estimates, Israel's actions in Gaza have already caused at least 186,000 Palestinian deaths.<sup>1</sup> This scale of devastation is so

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<sup>1</sup> Khatib, Rasha et al (2024). Counting the dead in Gaza: difficult but essential. *The Lancet*, Volume 404, Issue 10449, 237 - 238. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(24\)01169-3/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(24)01169-3/fulltext)

enormous that it has led to a chilling new medical acronym used only for Gaza: WCNSF (Wounded Child, No Surviving Family).

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, “the environmental impacts of the war in Gaza are unprecedented,” contaminating and destroying soil, water, and air.<sup>2</sup> An estimated 60 million tons of carbon will be generated during the war and post-war reconstruction, with 600,000 tons already released into the environment, contributing massively to the climate crisis. Infrastructure in Gaza has been catastrophically destroyed, with a UN report conservatively estimating that reconstruction could take 80 years.

The International Court of Justice has released two decisions this past year that have declared Israel’s actions in Palestine illegal. The first decision released in May 2024—which was duly ignored—ordered Israel to halt its Rafah offensive due to concerns that it would lead “to conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part,” a criterion for the crime of genocide under the Genocide Convention.<sup>3</sup> In a second judgment in July 2024, the court ruled that Israel’s 1) occupation of Palestinian territories (Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem) is illegal and 2) Israel’s actions constitute the crime of Apartheid.<sup>4</sup>

### C. Conditions in Palestine and On Campus Justify This Revised Proposal

Recognizing this devastating and worsening genocide, Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD) submitted a divestment proposal two months into the war on December 1st, 2023, to the ACSRI which was ultimately rejected for its alleged lack of consensus. As a group of concerned Columbia students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members, we now submit this revised proposal to the Committee under continued worsening dire conditions in Palestine, growing campus advocacy (see Appendix for a list of petitions and referendums), and urgent international calls for an end to the genocide.

### D. Consensus Exists Intrinsicly on Imperativeness of Ethics

The view that there is no consensus for this proposal within the Columbia University community is ill-conceived. There is ample incontrovertible agreement over ethics and principles espoused by Columbia University that would supersede any opposition. Notably, Columbia has made a commitment to socially responsible investing which would compel the university to divest from all entities that fund or invest in the perpetuation of violations of human rights and international

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Environment Programme. (2024). *Damage to Gaza Causing New Risks to Human Health and Long Term Recovery*. Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/damage-gaza-causing-new-risks-human-health-and-long-term-recovery>

<sup>3</sup> International Court of Justice. (2024, January 26). *Order of 26 January 2024*. Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.icj-cij.org/node/203447>

<sup>4</sup> International Court of Justice. (2024). *Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*. Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/186>

law. This commitment represents one of the university's most espoused obligations, making counter-arguments illegitimate.

Guiding principles on business and human rights underscore the moral imperative underpinning this proposal to enforce socially responsible investment. Columbia University has implicitly and explicitly endorsed the Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI) through its engagement with investment management firms, such as Columbia Threadneedle Investments and Columbia Management Investment Advisors, which are signatories to the Principles of Responsible Investment (PRI). The PRI is a set of principles and values supported by the United Nations that emphasizes respect for human rights by committing to not violating internationally recognized human rights, identifying actual and potential negative outcomes from investments, and preventing and mitigating them.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, this divestment proposal exceeds the “high bar” set by ACSRI for consensus. Entities affiliated with the University must be held to adhere to Columbia University's ethical principles that endorse the protection and realization of human rights as unassailable values, including in the context of socially responsible investing. We call upon the University to act urgently to end complicity in ongoing crimes and humanitarian crises in Palestine.

Despite the overwhelming evidence demonstrating the broader support for divestment from the larger Columbia community, ACSRI's rejection of last year's proposal on the grounds of a lack of “consensus” alone was also inconsistent with past proposals it accepted. Previous proposals rarely satisfied the criteria of “unified views” and the “absence of “strong opposition” was never stringently or consistently deployed. In 2013, for example, only 1,166 students voted in favor of divestment from fossil fuels, approximately the number that voted for divestment from Israel in 2020. Contrary to President Bollinger's assertion that all of these divestment decisions present “complex” policy issues in the American political landscape, the campus consensus—as represented by public demonstrations and student body vote majorities—was sufficient to change the University's investment policy around fossil fuel divestment at the time. Similarly, in 1985, Columbia University became the first Ivy League university to divest from companies propping up Apartheid in South Africa after a series of demonstrations led by students, including a blockade and hunger strike.<sup>6</sup> At its height, 1,000 campus community members participated in the blockade, which did not represent a majority of the community but reflected the strong campus sentiment. In fact, for years leading up to Columbia's decision to divest the school, the University Senate and committees staffed with both students and faculty faced extensive complications towards reaching consensus. Distinctive majority consensus was *never* achieved, but Columbia divested because of the unmistakable violence of apartheid. The culpable ties to Apartheid which underpinned Columbia's ultimate decision to divest from South Africa is at odds with the institution's failure to divest from Israeli apartheid today—which begs

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations. (2020). *Why and How Investors Should Act on Human Rights. United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment*. Accessed November 20, 2024. Retrieved from:

<https://www.unpri.org/human-rights/why-and-how-investors-should-act-on-human-rights/6636.article>

<sup>6</sup> Seaver, Margaret (1985, April 9). Columbia Protesters End Hunger Strike. *The Harvard Crimson*.  
<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1985/4/9/columbia-protesters-end-hunger-strike-pnew/>

the question: Would Columbia divest from South Africa today? Similarly, the University subsequently divested from Sudan due to its human rights violations<sup>7</sup>, fossil fuels and thermal coal<sup>8</sup>, and private prisons<sup>9</sup> without requiring a certain percentage of “yes” votes in a referendum. In fact, no referenda were held for divestment from Sudan and private prisons at all.

In its rejection of the 2023 Columbia University Apartheid Divest proposal, ACSRI claims consensus needs to be “generally unified” and “there was no known support from any Columbia University affiliates for not divesting from apartheid South Africa, Sudan, private prisons or fossil fuels.” The available evidence from past divestment decisions does not support this statement, especially in the case of the South Africa and Fossil Fuels campaigns. The Private Prison campaign’s organized opposition came in the form of President Bollinger and ACSRI itself, which stonewalled the activists and arbitrarily canceled hearings, before ultimately agreeing to divest. Lastly, meaningful opposition to Fossil Fuels divestment included, among other voices, the editorial page of the *Daily Spectator*<sup>10</sup>.

The record of past ACSRI decisions conclusively demonstrates that Columbia has previously made divestment decisions primarily on ethical grounds and human rights principles, has done so in the face of at least some visible and quantifiable opposition on campus, and has not construed the “consensus” threshold to mean universal or near-universal agreement.

## Section II: Merits of the Case

### A. Israel and its Military Commit Gross Violations of Human Rights, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes, and Breaches of International Humanitarian Law

The Israeli military campaign in Gaza, supported by the United States, has led to a humanitarian catastrophe, with systematic destruction of infrastructure and civilians facing famine risks. U.S. support has raised concerns about violations of both Section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act and the Leahy Laws, which prohibit U.S. security assistance to foreign forces implicated in gross violations of human rights (GVHRs), such as extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. Reports document Israel’s obstruction of U.S.-funded humanitarian aid, including roadblocks, denial of access, and restrictions on “dual-use” items. Examples of restricted items include but

<sup>7</sup> Daneilla Zalcman (2006, April 28). Columbia to Divest from Sudan. *Columbia Daily Spectator* <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/2006/04/28/columbia-divest-sudan/>

<sup>8</sup> Columbia University (2021). *University Announcement on Fossil Fuel Investments*. University News. <https://news.columbia.edu/news/university-announcement-fossil-fuel-investments>

<sup>9</sup> Columbia University (2015). *Statement on Divestment*. Columbia University Office of the President. <https://president.columbia.edu/news/statement-divestment>

<sup>10</sup> Columbia Daily Spectator Editorial Board (2015). Divestment without discourse. *Columbia Daily Spectator*, Volume CXXXIX, Number 25. Accessed November 20, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://spectatorarchive.library.columbia.edu/?a=d&d=cs20151119-01.2.18&srpos=1&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN-fo ssil+fuel+divestment----->

are not limited to: clothing fabric, diapers, newspapers, sponges, and wedding dresses.<sup>11</sup> For instance, on October 9th, Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant declared a "complete siege" of Gaza, cutting off electricity, food, and fuel, while bombings rendered the Rafah Crossing inoperable. These actions directly impede U.S.-funded aid programs and raise questions about compliance with U.S. laws governing foreign aid and security assistance. Additionally, the Leahy Laws stipulate that U.S. funds cannot support security forces engaged in GVHRs unless effective remedial actions are taken. Despite documented cases of Israeli forces' actions falling under these criteria, continued U.S. assistance raises significant legal and ethical concerns.<sup>12</sup>

The Israeli military commits grave violations of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law prohibits targeting civilians including children in all armed conflicts. Multiple doctors have claimed that during their time treating those injured in Gaza, who consistently treated and saw children shot in the head and chest<sup>13</sup>. Evidence also shows that the Israeli military has used Palestinians as human shields in Gaza. As reported by a member of the Israeli military, the army detained Palestinian prisoners and forced them as human shields to enter dangerous spaces.<sup>14</sup> International humanitarian law (IHL) strictly prohibits the use of civilians to shield military objectives.<sup>15</sup>

International humanitarian law also prohibits attacking medical staff, the sick and wounded, and humanitarian workers, yet this is happening flagrantly and with impunity in Gaza. Patients needing medical care, including those needing cancer treatment and care for amputated limbs are rarely able to leave Gaza for medical treatment.<sup>16</sup> Palestinian health workers are being killed, forcibly detained, and tortured which is intrinsically a human rights violation and also has an exponential impact by preventing the sick and wounded from receiving medical care. As noted by Human Rights Watch, "The detention of healthcare workers in the context of the Israeli military's repeated attacks on hospitals in Gaza has contributed to the catastrophic degradation of the besieged territory's health care system."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Bayoumi, Moustafa and Chalabi, Mona (2024, June 24). Toys, spices, sewing machines: the items Israel banned from entering Gaza. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jun/24/gaza-blockade-israel-banned-items>

<sup>12</sup> US Department of State (n.d.). Leahy Law Fact Sheet. US Department of State. Accessed November 21, 2024. Retrieved from:

<https://www.state.gov/key-topics-bureau-of-democracy-human-rights-and-labor/human-rights/leahy-law-fact-sheet/>

<sup>13</sup> McGreal, C. (2024, April 10). 'Not a normal war': doctors say children have been targeted by Israeli snipers in Gaza. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/02/gaza-palestinian-children-killed-idf-israel-war>

<sup>14</sup> Krever, M. (2024, October 24). 'The Israeli military has used Palestinians as human shields in Gaza, soldier and former detainees say'. *CNN World*.

<https://www.cnn.com/2024/10/24/middleeast/palestinians-human-shields-israel-military-gaza-intl/index.html>

<sup>15</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. (2023). *Rule 97 Human Shields*. International Humanitarian Law Databases. <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule97>

<sup>16</sup> See for example, multiple local and international NGO and health worker accounts in Kouddous, Sharif Abdel (2024, November 1). Israel has all but ended medical evacuations from Gaza. *Drop Site News*.

<https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/israel-medical-evacuation-gaza>

<sup>17</sup> Human Rights Watch. (2024, August 26). *Israel: Palestinian Healthcare Workers Tortured*. [www.hrw.org/news/2024/08/26/israel-palestinian-healthcare-workers-tortured](https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/08/26/israel-palestinian-healthcare-workers-tortured).

## B. The Assault on Gaza Has Led to Massive Humanitarian and Public Health Crises and Contradicts International Law and Human Rights

### *Destruction of the Health System and Resulting Impacts*

The health system in Gaza is being extirpated by the Israeli military, including through deliberate military targeting of health facilities, medical and humanitarian workers, and deliveries of medical equipment and supplies. The limited remaining health services and dedicated healthcare staff are struggling to keep pace with the level of carnage, and function within severe logistical constraints and the threat of obliteration, causing unconscionable immediate and long-term consequences for Palestinians. The level of devastation to the hospitals and other healthcare facilities is staggering, including at least 512 attacks on health facilities, killing at least 759 Palestinians and wounding 1,000 others.<sup>18</sup> There are zero fully functioning hospitals, with 31 out of 36 hospitals damaged or destroyed.<sup>19</sup> Only 17 partially functional hospitals for 2.3 million people remain as of October 2024.<sup>20</sup>

Israel's actions in Gaza have caused an unmitigated public health disaster affecting the entire Palestinian population living there. Horrific and worsening conditions contributing to the devastation include, *inter alia*, relentless bombing and ground offensives, water contamination and scarcity, untreated open sewage, grossly inadequate food and medical supplies, and overcrowding. The ongoing public health crisis has resulted in direct and indirect death and bodily harm, infectious diseases including polio, hepatitis, and diarrhea, malnutrition, and famine, illness from non-communicable disease treatment interruptions, death in childbirth, and trauma. Due to medical supply shortages, thousands of Palestinians have endured childbirth with no anesthesia or pain killers.<sup>21</sup>

Infectious diseases are running rampant through Gaza and will only get worse under current conditions. After twenty five years without polio, Gaza now faces outbreaks requiring a rapid vaccination campaign under the duress of war. Even considering underestimation in the setting of war, unacceptably high numbers of Palestinians have been reported to be affected,

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<sup>18</sup> World Health Organization, occupied Palestinian Territory and Health Cluster, Occupied Palestinian Territory. (2024, November 24). *Health Cluster*. Accessed November 26, 2024. Retrieved from: [app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrJoiODAxNTYzMDYtMjQ3YS00OTMzLTkxMWQOTU1NWUwMzE5NTMwIiwidCI6ImY2MTBjMGI3LWJkMjQ0NGIzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOjh9](https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrJoiODAxNTYzMDYtMjQ3YS00OTMzLTkxMWQOTU1NWUwMzE5NTMwIiwidCI6ImY2MTBjMGI3LWJkMjQ0NGIzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOjh9).

<sup>19</sup> European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations. (2024, May 20). *Palestine: Statement on Attacks on Medical and Civilian Infrastructure in Gaza and the West Bank - European Commission*. Accessed November 26, 2024. Retrieved from [civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/palestine-statement-attacks-medical-and-civilian-infrastructure-gaza-and-west-bank-2024-05-20\\_en](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/palestine-statement-attacks-medical-and-civilian-infrastructure-gaza-and-west-bank-2024-05-20_en).

<sup>20</sup> Doctors Without Borders. (2024, October 2). *One Year War Without Rules Leaves Gaza Shattered*. <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/one-year-war-without-rules-leaves-gaza-shattered>

<sup>21</sup> Elnakiba, Shatha, Mollie Fairb, Elke Mayrhoferb, Mohamed Afifc and Zeina Jamaluddined (2024, January 20). Pregnant women in Gaza require urgent protection. *The Lancet*, Volume 403, Issue 10423, 244 10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02835-0

including by mid-summer 2024, at least, 995,000<sup>22</sup> with acute respiratory infections, 577,000<sup>23</sup> with acute watery diarrhea (considered indicative of possible cholera), 107,000<sup>24</sup> with jaundice, at least 40,000<sup>25</sup> with Hepatitis A, including children (compared to only 85 in the same period prior to October 2023). After months of relentless bombardment, Gaza has become an effective incubator for “superbugs” that are immune to standard antibiotics and will impact surrounding regions.<sup>26</sup>

### *Famine and Blockades of Humanitarian Assistance Are Deployed as Weapons of War*

Israel also intentionally impedes the delivery of adequate humanitarian aid, including food, to Gaza, in violation of international humanitarian law, which prohibits starvation as a method of warfare. The subsequent suffering is preventable, inexcusable, and ongoing, compounded by the siege in northern Gaza. Agriculture has been adversely impacted by the war, with an estimated 70% of crops destroyed, increasing reliance on the limited potential food aid.<sup>27</sup> The IPC Famine Review Committee, considered the preeminent international mechanism for famine warnings, issued an alert on November 8, 2024, warning that 1) “The humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip is extremely grave and rapidly deteriorating” and 2) “There is a strong likelihood that famine is imminent in areas within the northern Gaza Strip”.<sup>28</sup> All of Gaza is in IPC Phase 4 of (Emergency) acute food insecurity, one step away from Phase 5, considered catastrophic famine. If sufficient data were collected, Gaza would likely reach this level as well. As the observer to the UN from Palestine commented “severe malnutrition is not a quiet or painless death.”<sup>29</sup> International observers and UN special rapporteurs concur with the assessment that starvation in Gaza is deliberate and constitutes a war crime. A Special Rapporteur on the right to food has

<sup>22</sup> World Health Organization (2024, August 8). *300 Days of War: Health Crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory*. Retrieved from: [healthcluster.who.int/newsroom/news/item/08-08-2024-300-days-of-war-health-crisis-in-the-occupied-palestinian-territory](https://healthcluster.who.int/newsroom/news/item/08-08-2024-300-days-of-war-health-crisis-in-the-occupied-palestinian-territory).

<sup>23</sup> UN OCHA (2024, 29 July). *Humanitarian Situation Update #197 | Gaza Strip | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory*. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory, 29 July 2024. Accessed 26 November, 2024. Retrieved from: [www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-197-gaza-strip](https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-197-gaza-strip).

<sup>24</sup> UN OCHA (2024, 19 July). *Humanitarian Situation Update #193 | Gaza Strip | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory*. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Occupied Palestinian Territory, 19 July 2024. Accessed 26 November, 2024. Retrieved from: [www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-193-gaza-strip](https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-193-gaza-strip).

<sup>25</sup> United Nations (2024, August 2). *Gaza: “Frightening increase” in Hepatitis A cases*. Retrieved from UN News website: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/08/1152791>

<sup>26</sup> O’Neill, Rory (2024, September 12). Wars are breeding superbugs that will spread ‘everywhere’. *Politico*. <https://www.politico.eu/article/war-ukraine-gaza-superbugs-spread-who-amr-global-emergency/>

<sup>27</sup> United Nations (2024, October 17). *Over 1.8 million in Gaza face extreme hunger*. UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1155836>

<sup>28</sup> IPC FAMINE REVIEW COMMITTEE ALERT GAZA STRIP. (2024, November). Retrieved from [https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC\\_FRC\\_Alert\\_Gaza\\_Nov2024.pdf](https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_FRC_Alert_Gaza_Nov2024.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> United Nations (2024, October 18). *As Gaza Faces Starvation, Food Rights Expert Tells Third Committee “You Did Not Act” on Genocide Risk | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. Retrieved from <https://press.un.org/en/2024/gashc4414.doc.htm>.

characterized Israel's blockade of aid as a "starvation campaign"<sup>30</sup> and admonished that "food is increasingly being used as a weapon against civilians"<sup>31</sup>.

### C. The Military Siege on Gaza Destroys the Local Environment While Also Exacerbating Global Climate Change

Israel's actions in Gaza have led to significant environmental destruction. Historically, the Columbia community has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing environmental harm, as evidenced by prior ACSRI decisions that placed substantial weight on the environmental impacts of institutional investments. This precedent underscores the importance of evaluating the environmental dimensions of current issues with the same rigor. In this context, we examine the environmental degradation in Gaza, situating it within Columbia's established framework for assessing environmental harm, such as its evaluations of fossil fuel-related enterprises.

In 2020, ACSRI issued a report recommending partial divestment from fossil fuel companies, establishing a key precedent for ethical investment at Columbia University. The report opens with a section titled, "Why the ACSRI recommends taking action on fossil fuels," outlining six compelling reasons for divestment. These justifications are equally applicable to companies complicit in acts of genocide in Palestine, such as Lockheed Martin and Caterpillar, whose actions perpetuate cycles of violence and human suffering. In this subsection, we provide direct responses to the language employed by ACSRI in the past to demonstrate how ACSRI's framework not only reinforces this proposal for divestment but also highlights the broader potential for Columbia to lead in advancing socially responsible investment practices and catalyzing global change through institutional finances.

1. ACSRI principle: *Climate change is a man-made crisis and its complexity requires a coordinated response.*
  - a. Our rejoinder: The manufactured conditions of ecological destruction in Palestine as a result of Israel bombardment, and military operations include: air, water, and soil contamination, the generation of 39 million tons of debris, the targeted collapse of arable farmland, and waste management facilities. According to the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, Israel has dropped over 25,000 tonnes of explosives on the Gaza Strip since October 7th—equivalent to two nuclear bombs.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Lederer, E. M. (2024, September 6). UN investigator accuses Israel of a "starvation campaign" in Gaza that Netanyahu denies. *AP News*. Accessed November 21, 2024. Retrieved from <https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-gaza-war-un-food-starvation-d9afdd12ec8da3152d4d0c88b473ca62>

<sup>31</sup> United Nations (2024, October 18). *As Gaza Faces Starvation, Food Rights Expert Tells Third Committee "You Did Not Act" on Genocide Risk | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases*. Retrieved from <https://press.un.org/en/2024/gashc4414.doc.htm>.

<sup>32</sup> Duggal, Hanna, Mohammed Hussein and Shakeeb Asrar (2023, November 9). Israel's attacks on Gaza: The weapons and mapping the scale of destruction. *Al Jazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/11/9/israel-attacks-on-gaza-weapons-and-scale-of-destruction>

2. ACSRI principle: *Fossil fuels are the primary source of greenhouse gas emissions.*
  - a. Our rejoinder: It is estimated that in the first two months of the Palestinian genocide, Israel singlehandedly released 281,000 tons of carbon dioxide—equivalent to the yearly footprint of 20 of the “world’s most climate vulnerable nations.”<sup>33</sup> This production of carbon dioxide is released directly from the use of fossil fuels in jets, tanks, and groundstrike technologies.
3. ACSRI principle: *Many fossil fuel companies have been “bad actors.”*
  - a. Our rejoinder: ACSRI defines “bad actors” as companies that act in opposition to research on climate change, an area “in which Columbia has dedicated significant resources and is a respected, academic leader.” To take ACSRI’s logic of what makes a company a “bad actor”, companies invested in genocide, would surely stand in opposition to human rights, an area Columbia supposedly supports and recognizes with an Institute, major, and claims to be a proponent of. Countless times since the beginning of this genocide UN human rights experts have called on nations such as the US to pull investment from Israel.
4. ACSRI principle: *Columbia’s actions have great symbolic value.*
  - a. Our rejoinder: As quoted on the Columbia University website, the university recognizes itself as: “Columbia University is one of the world’s most important centers of research and at the same time a distinctive and distinguished learning environment for undergraduates and graduate students in many scholarly and professional fields... It expects all areas of the University to advance knowledge and learning at the highest level and to convey the products of its efforts to the world.” As the university itself recognizes its actions have implications in the cities, across the country, and around the world. Divestment is a global movement, and Columbia taking action and recognizing the genocide in Palestine as genocide, would cause more Universities to follow. The university was a leader in divestment from South Africa, private prisons, and fossil fuels.
5. ACSRI principle: *Columbia’s investments should be aligned with its leadership in addressing climate change.*
  - a. Our rejoinder: Columbia’s investment strategy does not consider the contribution of military activity to climate change. The U.S.-based supply chain, including weapons manufacturers and military logistics operations to support Israel’s war, causes substantial environmental damage.
6. ACSRI principle: *The Columbia community cares deeply about addressing climate change and supports action from Columbia’s endowment.*

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<sup>33</sup> See both Lakhani, Nina (2024, January 9). Emissions from Israel’s war in Gaza have ‘immense’ effect on climate catastrophe. *The Guardian*.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/09/emissions-gaza-israel-hamas-war-climate-change> and Price, Kiley (2024, March 15). As Conflict Rages On, As Conflict Rages On, Israel and Gaza’s Environmental Fates May Be Intertwined. *Inside Climate News*.  
<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/15032024/todays-climate-gaza-israel-sewage-environment-debris-pollution/>

- a. Our rejoinder: The University highlights that it “cares deeply about climate change and views endowment as an important part of the solution.” In Gaza, climate apartheid fuels de-development, creating conditions deemed “unlivable” by the UN. The upper estimate of emissions from pre-war, wartime, and post-war activities is comparable to the burning of 31,000 kilotons of coal, enough to power about 15.8 coal-fired power plants for a year. The emissions associated with rebuilding Gaza are projected to be higher than the annual emissions of over 135 countries, equating them to those of Sweden and Portugal. As Columbia University has committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, it must consider how investment in the global arms trade significantly impedes this goal.

#### D. Investing in Complicit Businesses Contradicts Columbia’s Social Investment Policies

Columbia's commitment to socially responsible investing impels the University to divest from all entities that fund or invest in Israel’s gross violations of human rights and international law against Palestinians. Businesses involved in grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law and U.S. export controls in Palestine know that their business facilitates genocide, the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution, and other serious crimes including torture, killings of civilians, and attacks that disproportionately harm civilians. Weapons manufacturers are especially exposed to accessory to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, but firms in other sectors, from internet and communications companies to construction equipment, also meaningfully contribute to atrocities. For example, significant portions of Israel’s military infrastructure use Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud, and Caterpillar, a construction equipment firm, manufactures militarized models of its D9 bulldozer, which it knows are used, or reasonably should know are used, in human rights violations including in Gaza.

#### E. Evidence of Atrocities is Not in Doubt, Divestment Is Inherently Specific, and Alternatives to Divestment are Not Sufficient to Address Grave Harms

The evidence of atrocity crimes committed by Israel and on occupied Palestinian territory is not in doubt by any serious authority, nor is the fact that businesses in which Columbia invests facilitate these harms. Arguments against divestment therefore rely on assertions that it is unreasonable to “single out Israel” for violations of human rights and mass atrocities, when many other parties also violate human rights and commit mass atrocities, or argue that alternatives to divestment, such as shareholder engagement, are more appropriate. To the consideration of “singling out” Israel, we submit that divestment necessarily involves an exit from geographically and politically specific areas where avoiding complicity in atrocities and human rights violations is impossible. It no more “singles out” Israel to divest now than it “singled out” Sudan to divest when gross violations were unavoidable in that country. To the

consideration of the appropriateness of divestment, we do not oppose alternatives such as shareholder engagement but express our doubts that it will achieve the goal of cessation of human rights violations by Israel and on occupied Palestinian territory. Proponents of alternatives to divestment must show that those alternatives deliver results. Short of those results, stakeholder engagement is merely a delay in an ultimate decision to divest.

### **Section III: Feasibility of Divestment**

#### **A. Alternatives Other Than Divestment are Insufficient**

Above, we have demonstrated that overwhelming consensus exists among the Columbia community for human rights-based divestment, and that relevant companies are engaged in severe and persistent violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law and U.S. law that are unlikely to abate without outside pressure. As an institutional shareholder, both direct and indirect, in companies exposed to the Israeli occupation, Columbia has options at its disposal, ranging from engaging management to shareholder votes to complete divestment. We assert that management engagement and shareholder proxy voting are insufficient to demonstrate Columbia's resolve against illegal settlement, crimes against humanity, apartheid and/or genocide that relevant companies' business activities facilitate.

Shareholder action and public pressure have been applied to companies with regard to the human rights situation in occupied Palestinian Territories for decades, but severe violations persist. In addition, since 7 October 2023, the scope and duration of atrocities facilitated by relevant companies' business activities have only widened. U.S. diplomacy has similarly not resulted in a ceasefire, nor in any significant abatement of human rights violations. In such situations, where investments continue to facilitate persistent and severe violations of human rights and breaches of the laws of war despite massive public disapproval, shareholder concern, and diplomatic efforts, precedent demonstrates that divestment is the only realistic option.

Under Criteria #3, ACSRI proposals must compare divestment to the alternative of engaging with company management. Columbia's existing investments in and history of engagement with companies supporting Israel are not public knowledge. Given the scale and urgency of ongoing atrocities in Gaza, and given the history of Columbia consensus in favor of human rights-based divestment, engagement with company management is no longer a viable option.

#### **B. Divestment is an Urgent Necessity**

Consideration of reputational risk is a precedent set by the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investments Reputational and Integrity Due Diligence (RIDD) stating that potential risks associated with the "wrong" FDI partners include "negative public opinion both domestically

and internationally” and “negative socio-economic externalities.” The University must therefore critically evaluate how its ongoing investments in unethical practices compromise its broader academic and professional standing.

Here, we note the lack of transparency related to Columbia’s investments in businesses associated with grave violations of human rights and war crimes in occupied Palestine. Although we have been able to identify specific dollar values Columbia has invested in implicated businesses through public records, the total value of these investments is likely higher. However, complicit investments are unlikely to form a majority or even a plurality of the overall \$14.8 billion endowment, and by their very association with grave human rights violations, complicit businesses carry substantial downside risk as securities. By withdrawing from holdings that profit from Israeli human rights violations, Columbia can invest in other, more worthwhile companies.

We implore Columbia to drop investments that make us complicit in human rights violations, carry substantial risk of future losses, and do irreparable harm to Columbia’s reputation each day we continue to hold them. The prudent, human-rights-aligned decision is clear: we must exit these investments now.

### C. Divestment is Achievable, and Companies Associated With Relevant Violations Are Clearly Identifiable

Divestment from companies inextricably linked to human rights violations, violations of international humanitarian law, and U.S. law on occupied Palestinian territory requires an inventory of companies engaged in such activities. Such inventories already exist for ACSRI to reference, including but not limited to the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights List of Businesses in Settlements<sup>34</sup>, the American Friends Service Committee’s list of weapons manufacturers and companies complicit in human rights violations in Palestine<sup>35</sup>, and the divestment list used for the substantial holdings of the Presbyterian Church, USA.<sup>36</sup>

We recognize that ACSRI’s ultimate decision will be based on Columbia’s actual holdings and material exposure to companies facilitating such violations, and will require discussion with CIMC and/or fund managers.

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<sup>34</sup> United Nations (2023). OHCHR update of database of all business enterprises involved in the activities detailed in paragraph 96 of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session31/database-hrc3136/23-06-30-Update-israeli-settlement-opt-database-hrc3136.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> American Friends Service Committee (n.d.). *Divesting for Palestinian Rights*. Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from <https://afsc.org/divest>.

<sup>36</sup> PCUSA (2024). *Frequently Asked Questions - Divestment*. The Presbyterian Church (USA). Accessed 20 November, 2024. Retrieved from [https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/ga221-middle-east-faq.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/ga221-middle-east-faq.pdf)

#### D. Steps to Operationalize Divestment

We recommend that after referencing or drawing up a list of businesses that are associated with (1) severe, persistent violations of human rights on the occupied Palestinian territories, (2) severe, persistent violations of international humanitarian law on the occupied Palestinian territories, and/or (3) violations, or likely violations, of U.S. laws or regulations with regard to violations of human rights law or humanitarian law that are “more probable than not” (see Annex 2), ACSRI then sell all direct investments in relevant securities, and establish an upper bound for “material indirect exposure” through ETFs or mutual funds. Columbia has screened its portfolio for indirect exposures before, for example at the outset of the war in Ukraine when CIMC concluded it had “no material indirect holdings with Russian corporations.”<sup>37</sup>

For descriptive purposes, direct holdings we believe will meet this test include, but are not limited to Ametek Inc. and Teledyne Technologies Inc.:

Ametek Inc. is a company that produces cooling components for F-16 and F-53 fighter jets.<sup>38</sup> F-16 jets have been described as a “mainstay of bombardment” during Israel’s airstrikes on Gaza. In 2009, the United Nations documented that F-16 jets were employed by the Israeli Air Force to conduct airstrikes in Gaza during *Operation Cast Lead*.<sup>39</sup> During the 22-day assault, Israel’s military killed at least 1400 Palestinians, 300 of which were children.<sup>40</sup> Throughout *Operation Protective Edge*, the Israeli military killed 1462 Palestinian civilians with a civilian casualty rate of 65 percent.<sup>41</sup> In 2014, CNN and Truthout reported the use of F-16 fighter jets and Apache helicopters during Israel’s bombing campaigns, coinciding with \$196 million in fighter aircraft and attack helicopters sent from the U.S. to Israel a year prior.<sup>42</sup>

Teledyne Technologies Inc. is an American defense contractor with over 400 contracts to supply military goods such as military radars, artillery ammunition, and surface-to-air missiles; at least 124 of these contracts are with Israel.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, Teledyne has a long history of providing Israel with military drones and continues to supply electronic warfare systems and

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<sup>37</sup> Columbia Investment Management Company. (n.d.). *University Statement on Investments in Russia*. Columbia Investment Management Company.

<https://www.finance.columbia.edu/content/columbia-investment-management-company>

<sup>38</sup> AMETEK Rotron, *Markets—Military Aircraft*. <https://www.rottron.com/markets/military-aircraft>.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council (2009), *Human Rights in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories*. <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/12session/A-HRC-12-48.pdf>.

<sup>40</sup> Amnesty International (2009), *Israel/Gaza: Operation ‘Cast Lead’ - 22 Days of Death and Destruction*. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/mde150212009eng.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup> United Nations Human Rights Council (2015), *Report of the United Nations Independent Commission of Inquiry on the 2014 Gaza Conflict*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/co-i-gaza-conflict/report-co-i-gaza>.

<sup>42</sup> CNN (2014, July 29). F-16 Fighters Drop Bombs on Gaza. <https://edition.cnn.com/videos/international/2014/07/29/lead-f-16-fighters-spotted-over-gaza.cnn>; Gottinger, Paul and Klippenstein, Ken (2014, July 23). US Provides Israel the Weapons Used on Gaza. *Truthout*. <https://truthout.org/articles/us-provides-israel-the-weapons-used-on-gaza/>.

<sup>43</sup> Campaign Against Arms Trade, *UK export licences applied for by E2V Technologies for military goods between 2008 and 2021*, Accessed December 1, 2024. Retrieved from <https://caat.org.uk/data/exports-uk/licence-list?company=E2V+Technologies>.

“missile seeker heads” per their website.<sup>44</sup> Defense for Children International Palestine has reported details of Israel’s extensive use of aerial drones to surveil Gaza and in several cases used these drones to fire missiles, killing at least 164 children in drone attacks during *Operation Protective Edge*.<sup>45</sup>

Per the latest list of holdings shared by ACSRI, Columbia University’s endowment currently includes direct holdings in both of the aforementioned complicit businesses. Assessing this list of direct endowment holdings, three listed ETFs hold 2% or more military weapons stocks.<sup>46</sup> Columbia also holds extensive indirect holdings in many other complicit businesses.

With deference to ACSRI and fund managers on grounds of feasibility and granularity of information, we suggest an exposure limit for companies involved in severe, persistent violations through ETFs, mutual funds and absolute return strategies of no greater than 1-2%. ACSRI, together with the Board of Trustees or such designee as the Board shall see fit should report to the President of Columbia University and the University Senate on its progress by **31st June, 2025** following which sale of direct investments and replacement of indirect investments with higher than allowable exposure thresholds shall be completed by **1st December, 2025**.

#### IV. Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations

In previous sections, we demonstrate that consensus exists in the Columbia community for divestment from Israel and businesses associated with grave, persistent violations of human rights in occupied Palestine, both in a manner consistent with past ACSRI decisions on consensus, and intrinsically based on the human rights principles that ground socially responsible investment. We have shown that Israel, and businesses inextricably linked to the actions of its military and government, commit serious violations of human rights, international humanitarian law, and acts that international courts have already determined constitute the crime of apartheid, and plausibly the crime of genocide. We have also shown how certain businesses complicit in Israel’s actions likely also violate U.S. law, including the Leahy Acts and Section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act. Finally, we have shown that businesses operating in Israel and facilitating human rights violations in occupied Palestine are so inextricably implied in these

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<sup>44</sup> Kreis, J. F. (1990). Unmanned Aircraft in Israeli Air Operations. *Air Power History*, 37(4), 46–50. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26271146>; Teledyne Aerospace & Defense Electronics (2022). *Applications –Defence*. <https://web.archive.org/web/20221209104638/https://www.teledynedefenseelectronics.com/labtech/applications/Pages/Defence.aspx>

<sup>45</sup> Defense for Children International Palestine (2015). *Operation Protective Edge: A war waged on Gaza's children* (pp. 63). [https://www.dci-palestine.org/operation\\_protective\\_edge\\_a\\_war\\_waged\\_on\\_gaza\\_s\\_children\\_resource](https://www.dci-palestine.org/operation_protective_edge_a_war_waged_on_gaza_s_children_resource).

<sup>46</sup> Weapons Free Funds, *iShares Core MSCI Emerging Markets ETF*. <https://weaponfreefunds.org/fund/ishares-core-msci-emerging-markets-etf/IEMG/weapon-investments/FS00009PGX/F000000OPIJ>; Weapons Free Funds. *iShares Core MSCI International Developed Markets ETF*. <https://weaponfreefunds.org/fund/ishares-core-msci-international-developed-markets-etf/IDEV/weapon-investments/FS0000D08C/F000000YBTL>; Weapons Free Funds. *iShares Core S&P U.S. Value ETF*. <https://weaponfreefunds.org/fund/ishares-core-sp-us-value-etf/IUSV/weapon-investments/FSUSA00B5G/FEUSA00016>.

violations that actions other than divestment are not likely to meaningfully mitigate the harm caused by Columbia's investments. We therefore call on ACSRI to adopt the following recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Draw up, or reference, a list of businesses associated with (1) severe, persistent violations of human rights on the occupied Palestinian territories, (2) severe, persistent violations of international humanitarian law on the occupied Palestinian territories, and/or (3) violations, or likely violations, of U.S. laws or regulations with regard to violations of human rights law or humanitarian law that are “more probable than not”
  - **Criteria:** This action is taken with immediate effect.
- **Recommendation 2:** To the extent Columbia holds these businesses directly, exit the investments. To the extent Columbia holds these businesses indirectly, through mutual funds, ETFs, private equity strategies, absolute return strategies, or any other investment vehicle, set a maximum exposure threshold (we suggest 1-2%) and exit investments exceeding that level of exposure to complicit companies.
  - **Criteria:** Upon developing the list in Recommendation 1, or in any event, no later than 1 December 2025.
- **Recommendation 3:** Continuously review Columbia's investments for companies described in Recommendation 1.
  - **Criteria:** Upon Columbia's knowledge that a company has entered or ceased conducting such activities described in Recommendation 1, or in any event, no less than annually.

## Annex 1: List of Petitions and Referenda

**2002: Columbia faculty supports divestment.** In 2002, Columbia faculty across various departments presented a proposal calling for an end to our investment in all firms that supplied Israel's military with arms and military hardware.<sup>47</sup> This proposal was joined by students, alumni, faculty, and staff hoping that our institution would end their complicity in Israel's use of asymmetric and excessive violence against Palestinian civilians but went ignored by former President Bollinger's administration.

**2020: Columbia College student body votes to divest.** In 2020, Columbia College successfully passed yet another referendum calling on Columbia to “divest its stocks, funds, and endowment from companies that profit from or engage in the State of Israel’s acts towards Palestinians.” 61.03% of the 1,771 students who participated (1,081) voted in favor, 485 voted against, and 205 abstained. Overall, 39.3% of the Columbia College student body voted on the referendum, exceeding the baseline 30% required for a valid vote.<sup>48</sup>

### 2024: Subsequent divestment votes

- **March 13, 2024:** Union Theological Seminary Student Senate passed a divestment resolution with 89.1% in favor out of 55 student representatives. The resolution demanded administration divest from Israeli settler-colonialism.
- **April 8, 2024:** Columbia Law School Student Senate officially passed an advocacy statement calling on Columbia to divest from Israeli apartheid and genocide.
- **April 8, 2024:** The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Council (ASGC) nearly unanimously passed a divestment resolution.
- **April 19, 2024:** Columbia Alumni, including coalitions of Black Alumni, Muslim Alumni, Jewish Alumni, South Asian Alumni, and Alumni of the Law School and SIPA, write in support of the Gaza Solidarity Encampment and endorse divestment. The joint statement is signed by 4,697 alumni.<sup>49</sup>
- **April 24, 2024: Columbia College student body votes to divest again.** Columbia College passed another referendum calling on Columbia to divest financially from Israel, cancel the opening of the Tel Aviv Global Center, and end Columbia's dual degree program with Tel Aviv University.<sup>50</sup> The question on divestment passed with 76.55 percent of voters in favor, and 40.26 of the Columbia College student body participated.

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<sup>47</sup> Demos, Telis. (2002, October 30). Petition Demands Divestiture From Israel. *Columbia Spectator*, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/2002/10/30/petition-demands-divestiture-israel/>

<sup>48</sup> The Morningside Post. (2020, October 5). *Columbia College Passes Historic Vote on Divestment from Israel*. <https://morningsidepost.com/articles/2020/10/5/columbia-college-passes-historic-vote-on-divestment-from-israel>

<sup>49</sup> CU Alumni Action (2024). *Columbia Alumni Petition*. Columbia Alumni for Palestine. Accessed November 23, 2024. Retrieved from <https://cu-alumni4palestine.com/>

<sup>50</sup> Oscar Noxon (2024). “Columbia College overwhelmingly passes divestment referendum,” *Columbia Spectator*, April 22, 2024.

- **April 26, 2024:** Alumni of the Climate School write a joint letter in favor of divestment.<sup>51</sup>
- **April 29, 2024:** Teachers College Senate passed a letter of support demanding that TC call on Columbia to disclose investments and engage in full academic and financial divestment from Israel.
- **May 6, 2024:** Columbia School of Social Work passes a referendum to divest from companies complicit in the occupation with an overwhelming 90% of the vote.
- **May 9, 2024:** Board of Trustees of Union Theological Seminary, an affiliate of Columbia University, endorsed a policy supporting the institution's divestment from "companies substantially and intractably benefiting from war in Palestine."<sup>52</sup>
- **October 14th, 2024:** Columbia School of Engineering and Applied Science divestment survey results showed 74.52 percent of participants support the University's financial divestment from Israel.<sup>53</sup>

## **Annex 2: U.S. Domestic Statutes Supporting International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law (IHL)**

In this proposal, we refer to public international law including human rights law and international humanitarian law, in the context of business activities that violate grave violations of these laws, or inextricably facilitate another party's grave violations.

A common misconception about international law in the United States is that public international law is not part of the corpus of U.S. domestic law, and therefore is not applicable in a domestic context. In fact, the United States is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), a foundational document in human rights law, and the four Geneva Conventions, the foundational documents of international humanitarian law.

Furthermore, the U.S. has passed several domestic laws that implement rules and principles found in human rights law, humanitarian law, and other international treaties.

Here, we submit this non-exhaustive list of U.S. domestic laws, compiled by the organization Veterans for Peace and endorsed by a coalition of White House staff, that are likely violated by arms transfers to Israel:<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Alumni of Columbia University Climate School (2024). Columbia Climate School Alumni Stand with the Gaza Solidarity Encampment. The Slow Factory. Accessed 23 November, 2024. Retrieved from:

<https://slowfactory.earth/readings/columbia-climate-school-alumni-stand-with-the-gaza-solidarity-encampment/>

<sup>52</sup> Huddleston, Sarah, Vance, Shea, and Karam, Esha (2024, May 9). Union Theological Seminary trustees endorse divestment from companies 'companies profiting from the war in Palestine. *Columbia Spectator*.

<sup>53</sup> Cherukuri, Tulasi and Vasishta, Ria (2024, October 14). ESC survey results show majority support for divestment from Israel. *Columbia Daily Spectator*.  
<https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2024/10/14/esc-survey-results-show-majority-support-for-divestment-from-israel/>

<sup>54</sup>See both Schnall, Susan and Mike Ferner (2024). Letter dated February 11 to Anthony Blinken, Secretary of State. Veterans for Peace. Accessed November 23, 2024. Retrieved from  
[https://www.veteransforpeace.org/files/4017/0777/8707/VFP\\_StDept\\_ltr\\_FINAL\\_2-11-24.pdf](https://www.veteransforpeace.org/files/4017/0777/8707/VFP_StDept_ltr_FINAL_2-11-24.pdf), and Musgrave,

- **The Conventional Arms Transfer Policy**, which prohibits U.S. weapons transfers when it's more likely than not that the arms will be used by Israel to commit genocide; crimes against humanity; and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including attacks intentionally directed against civilian objects or civilians protected or other serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, including serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against children. Dozens of authoritative complaints and referrals made by hospital administrators in Gaza, as well as by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Palestine Authority, South Africa, Turkey, Medicins sans Frontières, UNRWA, UNICEF, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the World Food Programme have confirmed that there is an ongoing human rights and humanitarian disaster due to Israel's cutoff of water and electricity, deliberate destruction of sewage infrastructure and delaying of aid shipments by Israeli forces.
- **The Foreign Assistance Act**, which forbids the provision of assistance to a government which "engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights."
- **Arms Export Control Act**, which says countries that receive US military aid can only use weapons for legitimate self-defense and internal security. Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza goes way beyond self-defense and internal security.
- **The U.S. War Crimes Act**, which forbids grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, including wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, and unlawful deportation or transfer, perpetrated by the Israeli Defense Forces.
- **The Leahy Laws**, which prohibit the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights.
- **The Genocide Convention Implementation Act**, which was enacted to implement U.S. obligations under the Genocide Convention, provides for criminal penalties for individuals who commit or incite others to commit genocide.