

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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Resolution to Urge the University of Houston to Divest from Militarism and Endless War

Whereas, the University of Houston Student Government Association stands in solidarity with marginalized populations and aims to advocate against acts of injustice;

Whereas, the University of Houston states in its Diversity and Inclusion Statement¹ that it is committed to “equity, inclusion, and accountability” and is committed to change in order to “remove[s] barriers to success and promote[s] a culture of inclusivity”;

Whereas, the President of the university, Renu Khator, released statements² in June 2020 addressing the murder of George Floyd and committing to stopping racial injustice on this campus; and,

Whereas, while the University of Houston has repeatedly³ declared solidarity with marginalized communities through the above clauses and statements, their investments in various weapons manufacturers conflict with these values;

¹ [UH Diversity Statement](#)

² [George Floyd's Death](#)

³ [UH Statement on Atlanta Shooting](#) and [Counseling and Psychological Services-Students of Color](#)

Whereas, the University of Houston set a precedent as the first Southern university to approve of total divestment from the companies sustaining apartheid in South Africa, and by 1985, over 55⁴ universities across the U.S. either partially or wholly divested from apartheid South Africa⁵; and,

Whereas, the University of Houston has a significant history of activism for social justice, with university organizations⁶ playing a critical role in pressuring both the university, and subsequently the city,⁷ to materially divest from the apartheid state; and,

Whereas, divestment campaigns have been, and continue to be, a tool to reclaim political agency on campuses across the United States in the face of investments that sustain unjust, violent systems globally; and,

Whereas, UH's Investment Policy is focused solely on financial considerations and fails to take into account any other consideration, such as social or environmental concerns⁸; and,

Whereas, militarism is defined as a strategy of using violence (or threats of violence) in order to keep certain people in positions of power and maintain the racial, economic, and other social hierarchies that give them this power⁹; and,

Whereas, the investments of the University of Houston over the last 5 years include the largest military companies in the world, such as Lockheed Martin, Raytheon Technologies, Boeing, and Northrop Grumman, and General Electric,¹⁰ which arm militarization at home and abroad, thereby enabling violations of international law, and war crimes; and,

Whereas, Boeing has provided Israel with weapons used consistently in the deadly assaults on Gaza,¹¹ including guided missiles that killed Palestinian civilians in apparent war crimes during the latest 2021 attacks.¹² Boeing was also one of the largest contractors for building the U.S.-Mexico border wall,¹³ and produces Scan Eagles which have been used in target assassinations of the Indigenous Lumad people in the

⁴ [UH to Divest Holdings Tied to South Africa](#)

⁵ [Apartheid Divestment Campaigns](#)

⁶ [Direct Action Gets the Goods: The Black Student Union and the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Houston](#)

⁷ [City OKs ordinance limiting S. Africa ties and Ellis blocks exemptions to city South Africa policy](#)

⁸ [Investment Policies](#)

⁹ [Dissenters Points of Unity](#)

¹⁰ [Investment Reports](#)

¹¹ [Boeing Co | AFSC Investigate](#)

¹² [Gaza: Apparent War Crimes During May Fighting | Human Rights Watch](#)

¹³ [Boeing Co | AFSC Investigate](#)

Philippines; Sold \$1.5 billion in attack helicopters to the Duterte regime in 2020, \$120 million in missiles in June 2021¹⁴; and,

Whereas, Northrop Grumman provided a weapons guidance system¹⁵ and missiles that have resulted in thousands of civilian casualties in Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza¹⁶, as well as the advanced surveillance systems and databases used by US Immigrations and Customs Enforcement and the US Department of Homeland Security at the US Mexico border to profile and surveil individuals¹⁷; and,

Whereas, Raytheon Company supplies Israel and Saudi Arabia with weapons, which have been used against Palestinian and Yemeni civilians in attacks that have been condemned by Human Rights Watch¹⁸, Amnesty International¹⁹, and the United Nations²⁰ as war crimes; and,

Whereas, Raytheon Company also sells weapons to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)²¹ and the Los Angeles County Jail²² which are used to inflict intense pain, skin burns, and dermal damage on incarcerated individuals; and,

Whereas, Lockheed Martin, the largest arms-producing company in the world, enables war crimes and human rights violations by arming US Customs and Border Protections with aircrafts and surveillance technology²³, Israel with weapons systems used to target Palestinian civilians, such as medics, and infrastructure such as a UN shelter²⁴, and Saudi Arabia with the weapons used to bomb schools in Yemen²⁵; and,

Whereas, General Electric manufactured the engines used in jets, helicopters, ships, and other weapons used by the Israeli military on attacks on densely populated civilian areas in its 2008 and 2014 attacks on Gaza, the 2018 airstrikes on Gaza, and the 2006 bombardment of Lebanon; and,

¹⁴ [US State Dept OKs possible sale of F-16s, missiles to Philippines | Reuters](#)

¹⁵ [Missile Products - Northrop Grumman and Integrated Air and Missile Defense Battle Command System \(IBCS\) - Northrop Grumman](#)

¹⁶ [Northrop Grumman Corp](#)

¹⁷ [Border Patrol VADER: 4 Things To Know About The New Drone Surveillance Radar System](#)

¹⁸ [Saudi Coalition Airstrikes on Yemen's Civilian Economic Structures | HRW](#)

¹⁹ [Arms companies failing to address human rights risks - Amnesty International](#)

²⁰ [Saudi Coalition Airstrikes Yemen's Civilian Economic Structures](#)

²¹ [More Than A Wall | Transnational Institute](#)

²² [ACLU: Letter to Baca and Man Says LA Jailers Shot Him With Heat Ray](#)

²³ [Lockheed Martin Extends Aerostat Mission By Providing Airborne Surveillance For U-S Border Protection](#)

²⁴ [About Lockheed Martin Israel](#)

²⁵ [Yemen: Coalition Bus Bombing Apparent War Crime](#)

Whereas, the university has invested a total of \$7,607,364 into these companies since 2016²⁶;

Whereas, numerous U.S. and international civil society organizations have formally accused these companies and the entities they partner with as guilty of human rights violations due to militarism²⁷;

Whereas, examples of abuse and human rights violations through militarism include the indiscriminate bombing of civilians, separation of families at the U.S.-Mexico border, and apartheid;

Whereas, Amnesty International has officially categorized Israel as an apartheid state for its treatment of the Palestinian people²⁸;

Whereas, the University's investments in companies that sell weapons used in Israel's siege on Gaza indirectly aids the maintenance of Israeli apartheid; and,

Whereas, the University's investments in these companies indirectly aids the maintenance of human rights violations across the globe²⁹ by selling weapons to regimes that intentionally target civilian populations and critical infrastructure;

Whereas, the University indirectly aids the surveillance, detainment, abuse and separation of migrant families at the border by investing in companies that create and sell the technology used by ICE and U.S. Border Patrol³⁰;

Whereas, targeting militarism connects our struggles from Palestine, to Yemen, to U.S. streets and the U.S.-Mexico border, thus taking a decisive, material step towards our collective safety and futures;

Whereas, a growing number of student councils around the country have already³¹ voted in favor of adopting a more socially responsible policy, urging their universities to boycott or divest from corporations that commit human rights violations;

²⁶ [Investment Reports](#)

²⁷ [Bombing Businesses: Saudi Coalition Airstrikes Yemens Civilian Economic Structures and Arms Companies Failing to Address Human Right Risks](#)

²⁸ [Israels Apartheid Against Palestinians: a Cruel System of Domination and a Crime Against Humanity](#)

²⁹ [Report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict and Israel/Gaza Operation 'Cast Lead': 22 Days of Death and Destruction](#)

³⁰ [US Records Show Physical, Sexual Abuse at the Border](#)

³¹ [Brown University: ACCRIP | Investment Office | Brown University](#)

[Columbia University: Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing | Columbia Finance](#)

[Georgetown University: Committee on Investments and Social Responsibility | Office of Public Affairs](#)

Whereas, the University of Houston should honor its history of campus activism and previous commitment of divestment from South African apartheid by similarly divesting from Israel's apartheid; and,

Whereas, the University must consider the weaponry and projects it sustains through investments in these companies; and,

Whereas, continued investments in socially irresponsible companies shows implicit support for their actions and the actions of the governments and states they sell to; and,

Whereas, the consequences of these companies' actions include the killing of civilians, surveillance of marginalized communities, and abuse of vulnerable populations; and,

Whereas, these consequences impact the University of Houston community directly, including students and faculty whose families experience militarism, death, injury, and other forms of human rights violations; and,

Whereas, over 12 and counting student organizations representing diverse ethnic, cultural, religious, political, and academic backgrounds have sponsored the Divest from Death campaign, affirming their community's support for divestment, with petitions³² made in support of the university's divestment from the aforementioned five companies receiving significant support from the UH community.

Therefore, be it resolved by the Student Government Association of the University of Houston:

The University of Houston Student Government Association calls upon the University of Houston Board of Regents to withdraw its investments from companies that contribute directly, knowingly, and continuously to militarism, apartheid, human rights violations, and violations of international law, including Boeing, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Northrup Grumman, and General Electric.

Be it further resolved that the University of Houston Endowment Management Committee establish a task-force responsible for withdrawing investments in securities, endowments, mutual funds, and other monetary instruments with holdings in any of the aforementioned companies or subsidiaries thereof, at such time and in such manner as fund trustees may determine; and,

³² [Petition: University of Houston Divest From Militarism at Home and Abroad](#)

Be it further resolved that this task-force will be responsible for research and developing a Socially Responsible Investment policy which will guide University investments moving forward, and maintain the withdrawal of investments, in accordance with trustees' fiduciary duty, so long as these companies are no longer engaged in the violation of human rights and other behavior that fails to adhere to the guidelines put in place by said policy; and,

Be it further resolved that this task-force must include, but is not limited to, at least 4 student representatives from the above organizations, and that will continue to operate until the University of Houston's Endowment Management Committee establishes Socially Responsible Investment Screening; and,

Be it further resolved that this task force will operate with transparency and accountability to the campus community, and will review other divestment motions which may arise in the future; and,

Be it further resolved that the University of Houston Student Government Association unequivocally rejects the university's investments in any companies that contribute directly, knowingly, and continuously to militarism, apartheid, human rights violations and violations of international law; and,

Be it further resolved that the University of Houston Student Government Association supports the development of our campus free from militarism, apartheid, and endless war.



Rohit Shajan

Speaker of the Senate

Date of Senate Approval: 3-31-2022

Arsalan Darbin

Student Government President

Date of President's Approval: _____