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Australasian Zionist Youth Council Condemns the University of Melbourne Student Union's Antisemitic Resolution

The Australasian Zionist Youth Council (AZYC) and its affiliates strongly condemn the resolution titled "UMSU stands with Palestine - BDS and Solidarity Policy" passed by the University of Melbourne Student Union (UMSU) on the 29th of April 2022. The AZYC understands it is an emotional time for Jewish students, as the vote fell the day after Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day.

As a coalition of proud Jewish and Zionist youth movements, the AZYC deems the motion to be blatantly antisemitic. We recognise the conflict's political and historically complex nature, which includes a plethora of nuances - the opposite of the one-sided resolution adopted by UMSU. We also acknowledge that we should all continuously deepen our knowledge and education surrounding it.

The UMSU motion disregards Zionism and its complexity and "deems Zionism as a racist colonial ideology". The AZYC recognises that part of the Zionist movement's aims is to rectify centuries of Jewish oppression in Europe and around the world, allowing for a Jewish space in which cultural and religious expression is encouraged.

By labelling Judaism as a "faith" completely detached from Zionist ideology, UMSU has erased any recognition of the Jewish people as a nation and ethnicity with an inalienable connection to the land of Israel. Their attempt to define Judaism without consulting any Jews is simply outrageous.

Before and during the debate about the motion, Jewish students expressed their discomfort and distress caused by the motion. The AZYC and the youth movements it represents promotes youth empowerment and informed decision-making. We were extremely disillusioned by the UMSU Council, apparently unwilling to sufficiently hear or listen to student voices before forming their judgement on this incredibly nuanced topic. The resolution creates distrust for a multitude of Jewish and Israeli students alike and alienates them from the University.



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The AZYC is extremely troubled by the precedent this motion sets for universities around Australia. We encourage our Bogrim/Madrachim (leaders), Chanichim (youth participants) and members of UMSU to embrace a process of meaningful dialogue that acknowledges various aspects ignored by this resolution.

Instead of taking unilateral and divisive approaches, we should all engage in shared dialogue towards a peaceful future. We encourage our Bogrim, Chanichim and wider community members to do so, and not to remain silent in the face of antisemitic behaviour, such as that of UMSU.

The AZYC and its Youth Movements would like to thank its Bogrim who acted before the vote on educating and advocating with various UMSU Council members. We acknowledge AUJS' pivotal role as the sole representative body for Jewish students on campus and will assist them in their efforts toward reversing this unconscionable and antisemitic resolution.

Statement on behalf of:

- Australasian Zionist Youth Council
- Betar Australia
- Bnei Akiva Australia
- Habonim Dror Australia
- Hashomer Hatzair Australia
- HaTzofim Australia
- Hineni Youth and Welfare
- Netzer Australia

