Science for Peace

February 27, 2024

Dear members of Science for Peace,

There are numerous reports of attempts by various University Administrations to censor and punish students and Faculty that criticize Israel's actions in Gaza. Particularly alarming are the censorship attempts in Medical Schools. Given the attacks of the Israeli Defense Force on Gaza hospitals, which have destroyed most of them, it is not

surprising that many medical students and Faculty have expressed, in signed documents and social media, their alarm for the tremendous damage inflicted on the medical facilities in Gaza.

One example of this persecutory activity by university administrators is the indefinite suspension of Dr. Yipeng Ge, a 4th year resident physician at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine. A professor at the University complained that Ge's social media posts were antisemitic. He specifically referred to a photo of a protest poster that equated Zionism with genocide. Another example was an image of a poster with the chant "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free", which is commonly used to call for Palestinian liberation. Ge is an advocate for health equity, a public health graduate from Harvard who has worked in the West Bank and with the World Health Organization. The University suspended Ge, based on complaints of an alleged breach of conduct.

Another example of intimidatory activity against criticism of Israel's actions in Gaza at a university has been the interruption of an academic seminar by the Toronto police at York University. On February 2, Dr. Muhannad Ayyash, an Associate Professor at Mount Royal University, presented a lecture entitled "The Palestinian struggle for liberation: aspirations for a decolonial life". The invited lecture had been organized by York's Anthropology Department and there were around 30 people in attendance. The presentation was disrupted by Toronto police officers, even though there had not been any incidents prior to the disruption. When asked why they intervened, the police officers stated that they were acting on behalf of York University, which had contacted them to report "a major event". York's administration is now denying that it asked the police to come to campus, though it has failed to engage with the issue in a transparent manner or even issue a public statement about it.

A recent article by the CBC reported that physicians that support the Israeli Government were planning to use their influence to manipulate the placement of medical students in the medical residency program (CaRMS). This placement plays a crucial role in the advancement of medical students towards the acquisition of a license to practice medicine in Canada. The CBC article showed screenshots where members of a private Facebook group discuss plans to influence CaRMS to penalize students who signed a petition calling for an end to Israel's bombing of Gaza hospitals.

Universities should be places in which professors and students can express their views freely. University administrators have the responsibility to protect freedom of speech of all members of the university community. Faculty and students have the right to express their opinion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to advocate for Palestinian rights without fear of surveillance or retaliation.

On February 14 we had the opportunity to listen to the excellent lecture by our vice-president Richard Sandbrook entitled *"Climate Crisis and Capitalism, is system change the answer*?" If you did not have the opportunity to attend, the edited video of the lecture is available on our YouTube channel (see below for the link). On March 13th, at 5 PM, Science for Peace will present a lecture by Jonathan Kuttab, a Palestinian Human Rights lawyer and Christian pacifist who lives and practices law in the West Bank. The title of his talk is "P*alestine: Is There a Role for Non-violent Action?*". See below for registration links.

Jorge Filmus
President
Science for Peace

Upcoming Events

SCIENCE FOR PEACE
PEACE AND CONFLICT LECTURES, WINTER 2024

PALESTINE: IS THERE A ROLE FOR NON-VIOLENT ACTION?

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13
5:00-6:30PM ET

WITH SPEAKER

DR. JONATHAN KUTTAB

Location (Hybrid)
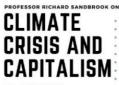In-person at the Paul Cadario Conference Centre, University College at U of T, and on Zoom

Jonathan Kuttab is an international human rights attorney and author who lives in East Jerusalem. He was the head of the legal committee that negotiated the Cairo Agreement of 1994 between Israel and the PLO.

Register below:
In Person
Online via Zoom

Recent Events and Publications

SCIENCE FOR PEACE
PEACE AND CONFLICT LECTURES, WINTER 2024

PROFESSOR RICHARD SANDBROOK ON:

CLIMATE CRISIS AND CAPITALISM

IS SYSTEM CHANGE THE ANSWER?

Location (Hybrid)
In-person at the Paul Cadario Conference Centre, University College at U of T, and on Zoom

Registration
In Person:
http://tinyurl.com/mr3pfnsf
Zoom:
http://tinyurl.com/3n4cy6md

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14 5:00-6:30 PM ET

Sandbrook is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at U of T and Vice-President of Science for Peace. He identifies the impasse in reformist and radical approaches to resolving the climate crisis. He proposes a radical-reformist paradigm that might dissolve the impasse by offering a just, viable and feasible pathway.

Climate Crisis and Capitalism: Is System Change the Answer?
-Richard Sandbrook

The United Nations: Systemic and Individual Flaws and Failures
-Judith Deutsch

There is much to figure out about preventable human-caused death in Gaza, in climate disasters, wars, starvation. At top of the hierarchy of responsibility is the UN, yet how to understand that 153 nations voting for a ceasefire in Gaza can't implement any action?

Continue reading

What is possible (Green Growth) is inadequate to the challenge of climate change, whereas what is necessary and desirable (Degrowth) is imposible in the short time available to us. To escape this impasse, we need to forego reformism and radicalism in favour of radical reformism – a supplemented Green New Deal

View Lecture

RECENT WEBINARS

www.scienceforpeace.org