



## **Petitioned Referendum Notice Letter**

February 16, 2024

Sent Via Email: [president@ams.ubc.ca](mailto:president@ams.ubc.ca)

Dear AMS Council & President,

This letter is to notify the President and Council that a petitioned referendum has met the required 1000 valid student signatures to be put on the 2024 AMS General Elections Ballot.

For context, a student contacted the Elections Administrator on January 29<sup>th</sup> with a drafted referendum question for petition. In accordance with Code, the Elections Administrator, with staff assistance, provided impartial and confidential advice when requested on the drafted question to the petitioner. The petitioner was informed that due to the expedited nature of their request to publish a petition and the complexity of their question, the Elections Administrator and staff were limited in the advice they could provide on the question, including because legal advice could not be sought before petitioning. Despite any advice provided by the Elections Administrator and staff, only Council can decide whether a referendum question meets the requirements of Bylaw 4(2), and the petitioner was informed of that.

The referendum petition titled “Demands for Palestine, the Food Bank, and Divestment at the AMS” has received over 1000 valid student signatures. In accordance with AMS Bylaw 4(1)(b), the Elections Administrator has manually verified using student records provided by UBC Enrolment Services that at least 1000 of the signatures are accompanied by accurate student numbers and student names. Since the petition met this requirement before the end of the day on February 20th, it met the required threshold to be included on the 2024 AMS General Elections ballot.

The Elections Committee will now consider this a referendum question on the 2024 AMS General Elections ballot unless Council decides that the question does not meet the requirements of Bylaw 4(2) and, by resolution, rejects the question. This decision is the sole discretion of Council, and the Elections Committee will follow their decision. The Elections Committee must remain impartial so they will not participate in any debate about whether a referendum question meets the requirements of Bylaw 4(2).

In accordance with Code, the Elections Committee will hold a referendum meeting for this and any other referendums on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and until such time, no campaigning is allowed to occur. At this meeting, the rules governing referendums will be shared with any interested parties, and the Yes and No Committees for referendums are encouraged to attend.

I have attached the wording of the referendum question as an appendix to this letter.

Sincerely,  
Max Holmes  
AMS Elections Administrator

## Appendix 1: The Referendum Question

“Do you support the following demands of the AMS to promote systemic change at the AMS and representation of students’ priorities, as expressed in mobilisation efforts for Palestinian human rights, food security, worker solidarity, climate justice, and Indigenous solidarity?”

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMS adopt the Motions Against Genocide in Palestine, as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the students of the University of British Columbia supporting these motions and our student union (the AMS):

1. Affirm that the position of UBC students supporting these motions is that the Israeli military campaign in Gaza, since October 7th, 2023, constitutes a genocide against Palestinians, including tactics of mass killing, displacement, dispossession, and destruction with the intent to ethnically cleanse the region of Palestinians.
2. Demand that our university’s administration immediately and publicly condemn the bombing campaigns and siege against the people of Gaza.
3. Demand that our University immediately provide concrete support to Palestinian, SWANA (South West Asian, North African), Black, and Muslim students, including grief circles, compensation for educating and organising labour, and safety measures protecting from potential stalking, harassment, and violence, as well as protecting from potential defamatory, professional harm.
4. Demand that our University immediately cut ties with any corporations, institutions or individuals complicit in genocide, settler-colonialism, apartheid, or ethnic cleansing against Palestinians.
5. Demand that our University immediately divest from and make no new investments into all corporations and institutions which students supporting these motions affirm are complicit in genocide, settler-colonialism, apartheid, and ethnic cleansing against Palestinians. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Bank Leumi Le Israel BM
  - b. First International Bank of Israel
  - c. Bezeq the Israeli Telecommunications Corp LTD
  - d. Motorola Solutions Inc
  - e. Bank Hapoalim BM
  - f. Israeli Discount Bank LTD
  - g. Lockheed Martin
  - h. Hewlett Packard Enterprise
  - i. Caterpillar INC

- j. BAE Systems PLC
  - k. General Mills INC
  - l. Partner Communications LTD
  - m. Cellcom Israel Ltd
  - n. Elbit Systems
6. Demand where feasible, that the University end Hillel BC's lease on unceded Musqueam territory, for promoting an Israeli Defence Force soldier to speak in an event on campus, which was protested by members and supporters of Independent Jewish Voices Vancouver who oppose Israeli occupation; and in response to a Hillel BC contractor distributing offensive stickers on UBC campus falsely attributed to the Social Justice Centre.
  7. Demand that the University end its global partnerships with universities in the state of Israel, including university exchange and international study placements in the state of Israel, such as through the Go Global program.
  8. Demand that the University protect, support, and promote speech in solidarity with Palestine and in condemnation of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza.
  9. Demand that the University's staff and administrators publicly apologise for their roles in bringing Campus Security against and cancelling the bookings for the Black-Palestinian TransNational Solidarity Event on UBC Campus, on November 17th, 2023.

BE IT RESOLVED that we demand our student union (the AMS):

1. make an immediate public statement condemning genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, and reaffirming its solidarity with Palestinian, SWANA, Black, and Muslim students.
2. commit to a strong, consistent position in solidarity with Palestinian students, and with the Palestinian struggle against genocide and settler-colonial apartheid.
3. continue its commitments to solidarity with Palestine, pursuant to the above referenced 2022 motion.
4. commit to a full cultural boycott of Israel according to PACBI guidelines and implement this into the AMS' institutional policies, frameworks and practices. The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) is made up of a collective of Palestinian academics, artists and cultural workers and is a founding member of the Palestinian BDS National Committee (BNC). According to the BNC, "PACBI has set out detailed guidelines outlining the principles of the cultural boycott and how it should be implemented in order to be in coherence with the PACBI call for a cultural boycott."

5. protect, support, and promote speech in solidarity with Palestine and in condemnation of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, by its active members, associate members, permanent staff, student staff, and part-time staff.
6. make consistent priorities protests, demonstrations, and actions demanding a Free Palestine, in solidarity with Palestine, and in condemnation of genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza, including but not limited to:
  - a. raising a solidarity banner of the Flag of Palestine inside the Nest Building for the duration this motion remains in force. The raising of the banner and its decoration will be directed by Palestinian students.
  - b. adopting the commitments of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement for a Free Palestine.

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMS reinstate associate members' access to the AMS Food Bank.

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMS shall not receive any new money for sponsorships from RBC until RBC funds less than \$27 billion (CAD) annually for fossil fuel projects, and withdraws full financial support from the Coastal GasLink and Trans Mountain pipelines—which do not have consent from Indigenous peoples whose territories they cross, respectively the Wet'suwet'en Nation and the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Stk'emlupsemc te Secwepemc Nations.

BE IT RESOLVED that the AMS shall move no less than \$100,000 (CAD) into a Vancity Community Investment Bank (VCIB) GIC savings account from the next RBC GIC savings account of \$100,000 or more that becomes available.”