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ACT UP NY MAKES HISTORIC ENDORSEMENT OF BDS MOVEMENT, JOINS CALLS FOR PERMANENT CEASEFIRE IN GAZA

33 years after protesting to demand the government "Fight AIDS, not Arabs!" amidst the Gulf War, ACT UP NY displays solidarity with Palestine in support of BDS.

New York, NY – On January 23, 1991 ACT UP NY staged its Day of Desperation, dropping banners in Grand Central Station demanding "MONEY FOR AIDS, NOT WAR" with corresponding actions across all five boroughs. Today, 33 years later, ACT UP NY is once again making the demand "FUND HEALTHCARE NOT WARFARE" signing onto the Queens For Liberation petition for a permanent and immediate ceasefire in Gaza, and announcing its support for the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement. [Our history](#) motivates us as we choose to stand with Palestinians against a settler-colonial state backed by the finances and brutality of the United States.

"I remember in 1985 during the early days of the AIDS epidemic, when at 21 years old I tested positive for HIV. Then and now, the U.S. government ignored the crisis, the media spread misinformation, and people were treated as disposable – people with HIV then, Palestinians now. We had to fight for our lives, our dignity, and our basic human rights. We had to create our own networks of support, care, and advocacy and reach out for solidarity where we could find it. I see in The BDS Movement, as in the development of ACT UP, fierce creativity and audacious hope distilled into effective non-violent direct action; I see a movement that could bring a ceasefire in the middle of a genocidal war and bring peace in the face of a seemingly immutable injustice." shared **Raffi Babakhanian ACT UP NY member and HIV treatment activist**.

Palestinians have faced unprecedented violence before and after October 7 .ACT UP formed in the urgent response to the AIDS crisis, so it is not lost upon us that Palestine is living under medical apartheid. The very hospitals bombed by Israel in Gaza were the same ones [providing HIV screenings, antiretroviral treatments, and therapy for HIV positive Palestinians](#), among other critical and life-saving services. As of January 18, [none of Gaza's 36 hospitals are fully functional](#). The genocide in Gaza necessitates urgent action from anyone in public health.

Tax dollars fund ongoing genocide abroad in Gaza, domestically our House of Representatives is proposing [\\$767 million in cuts to domestic HIV funding](#) in 2024. Globally, the House Committee on Appropriations is proposing to eliminate [\\$128.9 million in funding for CDC](#)

[HIV/AIDS programs](#). Our government is proposing nearly \$1 billion in cuts to both global and domestic HIV/AIDS programs, but will continue to find money to fuel senseless and unjust criminal war.

ACT UP has always been a rainbow coalition fighting in the struggles for queer and trans liberation. We recognize that Israel's efforts to pinkwash genocide weaponize queerness to indiscriminately brutalize Palestinians of all genders and sexualities. ACT UP NY is proud to be a diverse group of non-partisan individuals united in anger to end HIV/AIDS, with many of our members being part of the LGBTQ community. [This is why we join Queers For Liberation to call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.](#)

ACT UP NY proudly endorses [The BDS Movement](#). We call on our ACT UP NY members and supporters to join the movement in boycotting, against the [recently updated list of campaigns](#). Inspired by the South African anti-apartheid movement, BDS is a call to action to pressure Israel to comply with international law by meeting three demands:

1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall.
2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality.
3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.

We urge other ACT UP chapters, healthcare institutions, and LGBTQ+ organizations to take a stand for human consciousness, call for a ceasefire, support BDS, and remain steadfast in their beliefs of justice, equality, and welfare of all people. We are committed to fighting AIDS, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, antisemitism, and oppression of all kinds.

“CEASE DENYING THAT THIS IS GENOCIDE!CEASE DENYING THAT THIS IS ETHNIC CLEANSING!CEASE DENYING THAT WE ARE FINANCIALLY COMPLICIT! CEASEFIRE NOW!CEASEFIRE PERMANENTLY! As a long-term HIV/AIDS survivor since 1990, once again, I am witnessing our government participating in acts of hatred and greed. This time they are actively participating in the horrific act of genocide against the Palestinianspeople. Stop the genocide, the bombs, and the starvation. Palestinians deserve to live with freedom and dignity.” demands **Ivy Kwan Arce, a person with HIV/AIDS and ACT UP NY member since 1990.**

Photographs of ACT UP NY World AIDS Day Action on 12/1/2023 with JVP-NYC, ACT UP NY bloc at a rallies in Columbus Circle on 12/31/2023 and in Bryant Park on 1/6/2023 by Alexa Wilkinson: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gQRyHHGhNqZ9UOvfjCfwk6TBrEI5fNRz>

[*The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power \(ACT UP\)*](#) was founded in 1987 as a group of non-partisan individuals, united in anger, and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis.