



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACT UP NY PROTESTS THE GLAAD MEDIA AWARDS FOR COMPLICITY IN ISRAEL'S GENOCIDE

As Israel continues its genocidal campaign in Rafah, ACT UP NY and other allied groups and community members demand GLAAD, the largest LGBTQIA+ media advocacy group in the world, to platform Queer and Trans Palestinian stories, to call for an immediate and lasting ceasefire, take a firm position against genocide, and end its partnership with the ADL.

New York, NY – On May 11, 2024 outside of the GLAAD Media awards at the Hilton Hotel in midtown Manhattan over 150 Queer protestors and allies rallied chanting “When Palestine is under attack, what do we do? ACT UP fight back!” Speakers at the outdoor rally included HIV advocates from ACT UP NY (The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), Queer Palestinian artists and activists, healthcare workers, and Queer organizers who work on the ground in Egypt to directly aid Gazan refugees. Meanwhile, on the 42nd story of the Hilton Hotel, a 40 foot long banner was unfurled outside their windows reading “NY LOVES GAZA” with the [pink ACT UP triangle watermelon symbol](#) below. On the inside, drag artist and trans advocate [Chiquitita](#), interrupted the award show in a rhinestoned yellow gown yelling “GLAAD IS COMPLICIT IN GENOCIDE!” After reading pink and black flyers detailing GLAAD’s complicity in the genocide and erasure of Queer and Trans Palestinians, some GLAAD Awards attendees walked out of the event. All of this comes over a month after ACT UP NY launched their [email campaign](#) to demand GLAAD break their silence on Palestine.

“Living with AIDS is like living through a war which is happening only for those people who happen to be in the trenches. Every time a shell explodes, you look around and you discover that you've lost more of your friends, but nobody else notices. It isn't happening to them. They're walking the streets as though we weren't living through some sort of nightmare. And only you can hear the screams of the people who are dying and their cries for help. No one else seems to be noticing.” — **VITO RUSSO, GLAAD co-founder, [ACT UP Demonstration May 9, 1988](#)**

GLAAD was founded in 1985 in response to the AIDS crisis and the mainstream media’s homophobic coverage of it. At the time, over 16,000 people had died of AIDS, which was widely compared to a genocide. Today, over 40,000 people have died in Gaza, and the mainstream media continues to ignore the lives and deaths of Queer Palestinians.

Bigots of every stripe are actively erasing Queer people in this genocide, even though we know Israel’s bombs don’t discriminate. Meanwhile, hate rhetoric against Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and their friends flood the media every day. As the most influential Queer media advocates in the world, GLAAD must break their silence on Palestine. Queer people in media with positions of influence must raise the voices of Palestinians and push back against the

bigotry, stigma, and Islamophobic “war on terror” rhetoric that are fomenting fear and hatred around the world. Queer people exist everywhere, but they are being forgotten in Palestine.

“As a Queer Palestinian, it goes without question to me that there’s no such thing as Queer liberation without the liberation of Palestine. We fight for Palestine in honor of our Queer history and ancestors, for those Queer Palestinian siblings of ours living in Palestine, and for all those generations to come. This violent, unjust oppression — apartheid, bombs, weapons, mass destruction, disabling and displacement of indigenous humans — does not discriminate. Queer Palestinians are just as much a part of our community as any other, as such we must advocate for the end of this genocide & apartheid, from the river to the sea.” — [Noor](#), **Queer Palestinian-Syrian Artist & Writer, Speaker at outside rally**

Over seven months into Israel’s US-backed genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, GLAAD has chosen to remain silent while working with complicit and union-busting corporations such as Google, Walmart, McDonalds, Disney, Hulu, Coca-Cola, Amazon, P&G, and IBM. GLAAD’s silence and inaction fail both its commitment to end discrimination and oppression globally. GLAAD has also chosen to work with the ADL—an organization that villainizes students and peaceful protesters who stand in support of Palestine, that trains US law enforcement to use unconstitutional IDF tactics against US civilians, and that embraces openly anti-Queer figures like Abigail Shrier and Jared Kushner.

“GLAAD’s insistence on partnering with the ADL — which is widely denounced for anti-Black racism, support for militarized policing, and debunked stats on antisemitism -- is a betrayal of Queer communities. GLAAD can call attention to anti-LGBTQ violence without legitimating the ADL’s Center on Extremism, which smears Palestinian-, Jewish-, BIPOC-, and Queer-led social justice movements as ‘terror’ supporters. GLAAD can and must support grassroots-led work to build safety through solidarity, and refuse the ADL’s poison invitation to ‘support’ us with policing and repression. Thanks to mass grassroots uprising, led by young organizers who are drawing on Queer activist legacies, Zionism is no longer compulsory in US politics. GLAAD must catch up.” — **Emmaia Gelman, director of the Institute for the Critical Study of Zionism & ACT UP member since 1996, Speaker at outside rally**

ACT UP NY CALLS ON GLAAD AND QUEER PEOPLE IN MEDIA:

- 1. Platform Queer and Trans Palestinian stories**
- 2. Call for an immediate and lasting ceasefire**
- 3. Oppose genocide, occupation, and apartheid**
- 4. Drop the ADL**

Campaign live on ACT UP’s website: <https://actupny.com/glaad-silent-genocide/>

Photos of ACT UP protesting GLAAD Media Awards by Alexa Wilkinson:

☐ ACTUP-glaad gala

Video of Chiquitita’s disruption inside the GLAAD Media Awards: 📺 IMG_0954.MOV

[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.