

Australian IYSSE wins support at universities for its opposition to the Gaza genocide

Our reporters
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Over the past two weeks, International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) members have been campaigning at orientation events at Australian universities.

IYSSE members have found widespread shock and anger over the Israeli onslaught against Gaza, which is helping to politicise the younger generation. Numbers of students have participated in the weekly demonstrations against the genocide, which are the longest running anti-war movement in the country since at least the Vietnam war.

There is also widespread anger over the worst cost-of-living crisis in decades, compounded by the mass illness and death due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Young people are animated by the climate catastrophe, and increasingly aware of a threat of fascism, as well as of a catastrophic nuclear war.

The IYSSE has been raising that the central question is how capitalist barbarism can be opposed.

IYSSE members have spoken to hundreds of students and distributed thousands of copies of its statement, “Capitalism leads to genocide and war—youth and students must fight for world socialism!”

That statement outlines the need for a socialist perspective oriented to the international working class. This program is counterposed to the bankrupt perspective of the fake left who promote the illusion that the same pro-imperialist parties and governments funding and supporting the genocide in the US, Australia, Britain and elsewhere can be pressured through endless protest into calling for a ceasefire.

Dozens signed up as members of IYSSE clubs at Victoria University (VU) in Melbourne, Macquarie University (MQ) in Sydney and the University of Newcastle in regional New South Wales so far.

Orientation events will continue around the country

over the coming weeks.

The IYSSE received comments from several students over the last two weeks.

Yara, originally from Lebanon, spoke to IYSSE members at VU’s Werribee campus in Melbourne’s working-class southwestern suburbs.

“What’s happening in Gaza is so hard and so sad, because many people and many kids are getting killed. We have to stop these things, we have to stand with the people of Gaza,” she said.

“People all around the world are waking up. They see what’s happening there on social media. Israel is lying about Palestinians to manipulate people, saying that they are bad or terrorists, things like this.”

The student added: “The US and Israel want to take the land away from the Palestinian people. It’s wrong! There’s a long history of this. There has never been a real end to Israel’s deeds, for many, many years, because the US works together with it.”

A first-year environmental studies student at MQ, **Leo**, told the IYSSE: “I think that Israel is using the threat of one organisation that comes from Palestine as an excuse to commit a genocide and kill so many people. Most of the people in Gaza are children who could not be members of Hamas, and yet they’re being killed daily.”

Leo said the role of the Labor government of Anthony Albanese in Australia, who have supported Israel’s onslaught, is “really upsetting.” The student continued: “It’s really scary that, instead of looking at the thoughts of a majority of our population, especially a majority of young people who are strongly against this genocide happening, they are trying to do what just benefits them, rather than the people they’re supposed to represent.”

Commenting on the student strikes against the

genocide that took place last year, Leo said: “It’s really upsetting that they’re branding young people as terrorists and as antisemites.”

“I think that it’s just that young people are looking at the world around them and are seeing hardship—and using their very powerful voices, even though most of us are made to believe that we do not get to have a say in things like this.”

In response to the IYSSE’s call for a global anti-war movement, Leo said: “People can see this for what it is, which is just control over the Middle East and Israel kind of doing the dirty work of a lot of other countries such as the US to keep trade routes open and to keep capitalism running while killing so many people.

“So, I think it’s very valuable that there is a community and society of people who want that to change.”

Ali, a first-year MQ student originally from Bangladesh, said: “It’s a genocide that’s taking place in Gaza. It’s forcefully taking land of people. It’s bombing them unnecessarily, bombing hospitals, taking everything from them.”

The student said the support from the imperialist powers for Israel comes down to “economic ties.” Ali added: “They’re not supporting the ones who are in need, but only supporting the ones who are aligned with them. They have certain interests with Israel.”

“United States president, their defence minister, their visit to Israel—everything is about supporting Israel. They’re not saying it’s not correct and the bombing should stop. They’re openly supporting them.”

Ali denounced the Australian government’s support for the genocide and drew out the historical role that Israel has played for the imperialist powers as their proxy in the Middle East. This historical background, the student said, is hidden in the media.

“The media is basically brainwashing people. When you’re not going into the background, you’re not going to the depth of it, you cannot do anything about it. They’re just limiting people to a certain piece of knowledge.”



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