

IYSSE Australia and New Zealand hold meetings on way forward in fight against Gaza genocide

Our reporters
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International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) clubs in Australia and New Zealand held a series of well attended meetings titled, “The crisis of political perspective of the Gaza genocide” over the past few weeks.

Events were hosted in person on campuses at the University of Melbourne, University of Newcastle and Western Sydney University. An in-person meeting was also held in Brisbane and an online one in New Zealand. Watch the full meeting from NZ below.

Workers and youth are looking for a way forward to end Israel’s imperialist-backed genocide against Gaza which has killed 35,000 Palestinians in six months.

There have been sustained protests against Israel’s onslaught and the involvement of the imperialist powers, including the Labor administration of Anthony Albanese in Australia and the New Zealand government. Yet, as IYSSE speakers drew out, the genocide deepens, as does the political and military support given to the Zionist state of Israel by the major powers.

IYSSE members warned that the genocide in Gaza and spread of war in the Middle East, as well as the ongoing NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and US-led provocations of China present a real danger of a nuclear third world war.

The meetings explained that, in spite of this, the pseudo-left groups such as Socialist Alternative, Socialist Alliance and Solidarity in Australia, and the International Socialist Organisation in New Zealand, continue to peddle the illusion that endless protest will somehow pressure these same governments actively supporting the genocide to call for a ceasefire. The pseudo-left are also propping up the corporatised trade union apparatuses which have suppressed any industrial action by workers against the Israel’s onslaught.

Fake left tendencies internationally are attempting to politically-neuter the developing anti-war movement among workers and youth. This, the IYSSE explained, is because these tendencies represent the interests of a wealthy layer of the upper middle class which benefit from the capitalist system, the system which is the cause of war.

Diametrically opposed to this was the perspective advanced by the IYSSE at the meetings: for youth and students to orient

to the world working class, as the only force which can end capitalism.

To illustrate this, IYSSE speakers referred to the experience of the 1917 Russian revolution. That event was the greatest anti-war movement of all time, having ended the First World War. It was successful, the IYSSE explained, because the Bolshevik Party led by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky built a Marxist revolutionary party in advance of the struggles of the Russian working class based on the principles of internationalism and socialism.

This, the IYSSE stressed, is the task of young people today.

Common questions arose across the meetings. One question which came up at several campuses was: If protests, petitions and appeals alone are not enough to end the genocide, then what can young people do?

IYSSE speakers responded by stressing that students and youth must take up the fight to orient the working class to revolutionary socialist politics. It urged young people to join the IYSSE in going to factories and other workplaces to bring this perspective to workers and call for a general strike to halt the flow of arms and other military supplies to Israel.

Another question was: How can we build a revolutionary party today?

Members of the IYSSE explained that the revolutionary party must and can only be built through the constant exposure of all those tendencies which present left phraseology but seek to funnel opposition back behind the capitalist system.

Attendees stayed back for further discussion and to purchase books on a host of different issues including a recent release by *World Socialist Web Site* International Editorial Board chairman David North called, “The Logic of Zionism: From Nationalist Myth to the Gaza Genocide.”

IYSSE members interviewed some of the participants after the meetings.

In Melbourne, one University of Melbourne student said: “I thought the meeting was very engaging; it gave us plenty of room to speak without talking down to our opinions or our lack of knowledge in certain areas and I think it broke down the difference between protest politics and the politics of

Trotskyism. It broke down the difference in a way that was very easy for normal people to understand.”

“I think it is a genocide and totally unfair that Hamas is being used as an excuse to carpet bomb a whole race of people,” he said.

The student agreed with the urgency of building an anti-war movement on an anti-capitalist basis: “I think the Ukraine war and the stuff going on in China and Pacific Islands is a clear indication of World War III.

“The only thing waiting for me in capitalism is a big bunch of sh*t. I will never be able to own a house, I will never be able to save enough money to do my own goals that are fulfilling to me, and of course there’s climate change.”

Damian, a tutor at the University of Melbourne, also spoke with IYSSE members.

“The meeting was very informative, especially on the distinction between the IYSSE and other tendencies,” he said. “I liked how the central message was the power of a global movement of young people and workers. That’s really important, in resolving smaller issues today it always comes back to the global situation.”

Damian said: “This is a genocide. I feel sorry for the Palestinians, but also the Israeli population at this time. I hate when innocent people are caught up in power struggles which are out of their control and not in their interests, in terms of capital and geopolitics. It doesn’t feel like a war, it feels more like a slaughterhouse. The Palestinians in Gaza are penned in and being slaughtered. But I feel for Israelis as well who are being associated with these crimes, it’s a very difficult time.”

On the Australian Labor government’s support for genocide, he said: “It comes down to why Israel is a military ally to Australia, the relationships between nation states. Australia works with the US and therefore Israel, there are shared interests. For a long time I’ve never had faith in either of the two major parties [Labor and Liberal].”

A Western Sydney University student originally from Egypt, told IYSSE members: “I feel very passionate and strongly about humanitarian rights, equity and equality and not just in Australia, but throughout the world and the globe.”

The student said that she’s been following the Gaza genocide since it began. She denounced the media’s role in presenting it as a just war between Israel and Hamas terrorists.

“I think it has to do with the government and that they’re trying to push the narrative in order to gain more support from people,” she said.

She said she agreed with the central theme of the meeting that it’s necessary to “not just to pressure governments, but having to change the way that the system is. And not just for the working class of today, but for future generations.”

David, who attended the New Zealand meeting, said: “How could this genocide be allowed to happen? That in itself shows the extreme failure of the global capitalist system. I agree with you on that.” He added that there was also no popular support

for the genocide in Gaza or the war with Russia, but “there’s a complete disconnect between what people want and what’s actually happening.”

He added that the IYSSE had “made some very good points about unions not giving people the opportunity to strike when it comes to handling weapons going to Israel.” He said the unions had become “toothless” and industrial action had largely disappeared since the 1980s.

He asked why protest organisers had allowed Labour Party politicians to speak at pro-Palestine events “when they’ve pretty much given the green light to genocide.” He agreed with the IYSSE that protesting in the hopes “that Labour’s going to do the right thing is a failed mission, because they don’t represent any ideals or values.”

He sharply criticised “anti-war” protest organisers who supported the war against Russia in Ukraine, as though the same powers that were “doing horrible things in support of Israel are the good guys in Ukraine.”

In Newcastle, **Clem** said: “I came to this meeting especially because of the topic, on the Gaza genocide and the Israeli occupation of Palestine. I appreciate how the meeting centred class consciousness over identity politics. The question of war and oppression aren’t race questions—my thoughts on the subject are that at the end of the day, all oppression is based in class. It’s all down to who is controlling the means of production.

“I also agree with what the meeting brought up, that what is happening in Gaza is a precursor and this treatment is going to continue and be used against the working class worldwide. Protesting does help, but there are more direct forms—there needs to be strikes, depleting the resources that this war is running on. The pseudo-left, as you put it, and the trade unions aren’t calling for this action, as organisations of the working class are meant to do. War never benefits the working class in any aspect. Budgets are spent on the military and take away spending on workers, specifically. I believe that if [the IYSSE/SEP] aims to put power into the hands of workers directly, this would be beneficial.”



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