NWSA: Palestinian Solidarity is a Feminist Issue

*With our oppressors uniting, it is becoming increasingly clear that all our struggles for freedom are interconnected, and that no one will be free until we are all free.*

-Angela Davis

The National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) is not a silent organization. We do not spend our days quietly watching and wringing our hands as injustice and hatred, indiscriminate bombings, ethnic violence, and conflict play out around us. We understand, as Desmond Tutu once said, that if we are neutral in situations of injustice, we choose the side of the oppressor. As feminists, activists, teachers, and scholars, we will never choose the side of the oppressor, which means that we will always speak up against injustice, no matter the cost. Herstory has her eye on us and will record and remember where we stood when we stood and why we spoke out.

At this moment, as we are watching what is happening in Palestine (again), we are moved to remind the world that we have stood and will continue to stand in solidarity with Palestine and support the struggle for Palestinian liberation. This is not a new position for our organization. In 2015, NWSA members voted overwhelmingly to support the boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) movement. The adopted measure, put forward by the Feminists for Justice in/for Palestine ad-hoc group, noted that “we recognize the interconnectedness of systemic forms of oppression. In the spirit of this intersectional perspective, we cannot overlook the injustice and violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, perpetrated against Palestinians and other Arabs in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, within Israel and in the Golan Heights, as well as the colonial displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians during the 1948 Nakba.”

This is where we stood six years ago and where we stand today. We understand that it is not enough for us to have discussions amongst ourselves within the protective silos of the Academy. We must speak out into the wind with a loud collective voice and say that Palestinian Solidarity is a feminist issue, as the Palestinian Feminist Collective reminds us. Our voices have power. We must stand and not be moved. Maya Angelou reminds us that we may come as One, but we stand as 10,000. We do this by standing together. We do this by adding our voice to the collective call across the world to condemn the forced removal of Palestinians from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, the raiding of the al-Aqsa mosque, the indiscriminate bombing of Gaza, and the actions of Israeli settlers, with the support of Israeli police and military forces, invading homes and brutalizing Palestinians. We believe in collective action and social justice. We support the rights of Palestinians to freedom and peace (not just as the absence of war but as the presence of justice). We end by holding fast to and being challenged by the words of June Jordan who
once wrote, Freedom is indivisible, or it is nothing at all besides sloganeering and temporary, short-sighted, and short-lived advancement for a few.

In solidarity,
National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA)

Please consider joining numerous Gender and Women’s Studies departments and programs in the U.S., Canada, and beyond by signing a pledge of solidarity with the Palestinian Feminist Collective.

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