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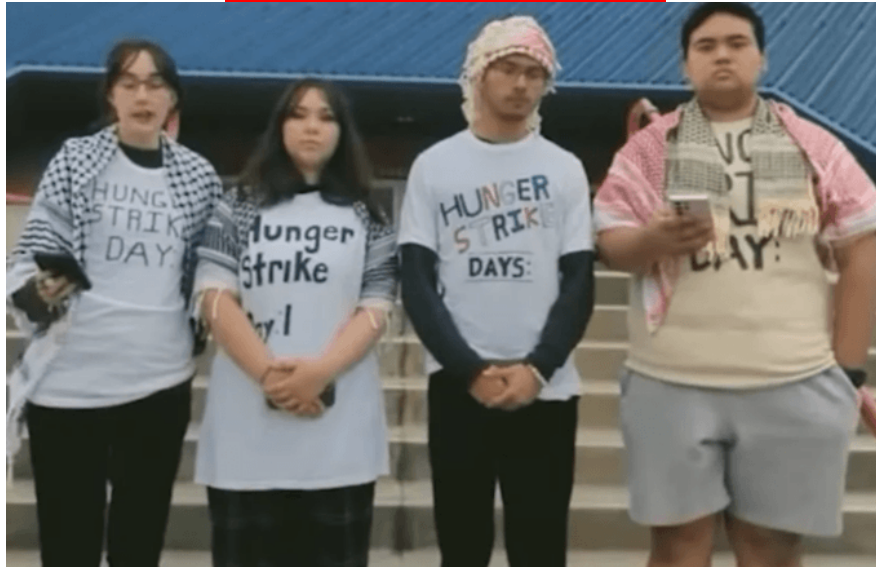
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زبانهای اروپایی

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California State University Long Beach Students Go on Hunger Strike for Gaza



Cal State Long Beach students are stating their demands on their Instagram account. Source: Instagram account @SJPatCSULB

On May 5th, seven students from California State University, Long Beach, launched a hunger strike as part of an organized protest across four CSU campuses: San Francisco, Sacramento, and San Jose State. In total, twenty-five students are striking for Gaza. They join a wave of nationwide protests demanding an immediate end to the United States' arming and facilitating a genocide in Gaza by Israel.

The seven strikers announced on the campus their commitment to refuse food until their institution divests from companies that supply weapons, military equipment, and surveillance technology, among other demands, to Israel's military. In addition, they call on their campus administration to pressure other CSU presidents and the Board of Trustees to do the same.

“This is part of a larger student movement to ensure that California State Students’ tuition, and Universities’ investments, are not complicit in the genocide of the Palestinian people,” read the statement by the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at CSULB.

Similar hunger strikes and encampments have spread to campuses in the Los Angeles area. Thirty miles north in Eagle Rock, ten Occidental College students began their hunger strike protest in April. Like the students in Long Beach, their demands included protecting students from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and providing a Sanctuary Campus for non-citizen students. The strike has drawn both support and backlash, with the protesters being accused of antisemitism, a claim organizers firmly deny.

University officials have yet to respond to a request for comment for this article. Meanwhile, students and local activists began providing water and electrolytes to the strikers, while medical students volunteered to monitor their health. “We (strikers) are in constant communication, and we have a lot of support from student organizers,” said Marcus Bode, one of the seven hunger strikers at CSU Long Beach.

As the strike enters its third day, local attention is growing, said Bode, hoping to get the nation’s attention so it applies pressure to the CSU school system to divest from Israel.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2025

Contact:

Students for Justice in Palestine at CSULB



CSU STUDENTS LAUNCH UNITED HUNGER STRIKE FOR GAZA

We, the students of San Francisco, Sacramento, Long Beach, and San Jose State Universities, are beginning a **united hunger strike in solidarity with the two million Palestinians at risk of starvation in Gaza**. We refuse to be complicit in the Israeli occupation's siege on Gaza, which has left countless Palestinians suffering from malnourishment, disease, and death. Starvation as a tool of war and collective punishment has already **taken the lives of 17,000 children in Gaza** since October 2023.

Outside of the ongoing bombardment, the targeting of humanitarian workers and journalists, and the **deliberate murder of civilians**, Israel has added starvation to its arsenal. The Israeli government aims to continue the mass extermination of Palestinians by withholding **food, water, medicine, fuel**, and other supplies at the border, while barring humanitarian workers and medical aid from entering Gaza.

This siege on Gaza is another step in the genocide of Palestinians. It is a calculated effort intended to deprive Gaza and the Palestinian people of necessities needed to survive and live with dignity. Our hunger strike is an act of solidarity with Gaza and an answer to their call. We understand the urgency of this crisis, and we demand our university leadership to not only meet the following demands, **but pressure other CSU presidents and the Board of Trustees to do the same**. This is part of a larger student movement to ensure that California State Students' tuition, and the University's investments, are not complicit in the genocide of the Palestinian people.

We, the students of Long Beach State University, acknowledge that our university and the California State University system **remains complicit in the genocide** of the Palestinian people.

We the students demand that President Conoley and Vice President Lesen publicly commit to implementing the following demands. Additionally, we demand that you unite with other CSU presidents in a joint effort to push these demands onto the Board of Trustees.

We, **the students of the California State University system**, demand the following:

1. **Adopt Human Rights IPS Screening:** San Jose State University, Long Beach State University, and the California State University system adopt the San Francisco State University Human Rights IPS Screening.
2. **CSU Divestment:** Divest from companies that supply weapons, military and surveillance technology, infrastructure, or conduct activity that violate human rights as defined by international law. This includes, but is not limited to: Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Maersk, Lockheed Martin, Caterpillar, Palantir, Leonardo.
3. **End all ties to Israeli Institutions within Study Abroad programs:** End any and all academic partnerships with Zionist universities, and the CSU International Program at the University of Haifa.
4. **Uphold Free Speech and end all time, place, and manner restrictions:** We demand that our universities lift any and all policies that place restrictive and repressive measures on the usage of freedom of speech and protest on university grounds. TPM is a policy that violates fundamental rights that our universities pride themselves on, and is a direct retaliation against student advocacy efforts.
5. **Publicly and openly establish the CSULB campus as a Sanctuary Campus for non-citizen students:** We demand that school administration forbid ICE and DHS from entering class rooms and resource centers, create anonymous ICE and DHS free zones for students, and notify students immediately of any ICE or DHS activity on campus. We also demand our university adequately support, fund, and elevate the Dream Success Center.



Until full liberation,
Students for Justice in Palestine at CSULB

Students for Justice in Palestine at CSULB demands. Source: SJPatCSULB Instagram

The protest comes as global outrage continues to grow over the rising death toll, and denial of food. "It is a privilege to be able to voluntarily go without food. That is not something Palestinians have the option to do. They will not survive another summer," said Bode.

The idea of using a hunger strike as a form of protest began on April 25th, when the United Nations (UN) agency World Food Programme (WFP) reported that it had run out of food in the Gaza Strip, as Israel continues to block any humanitarian aid into the region, where over two million Palestinians live. "The call came from students from Birzeit University in the

West Bank, and we were one of the first schools to answer the call because of the UN announcement,” said Bode.

Thousands of people depend on the U.N. food program for survival. The agency states that its warehouses are now empty and cannot provide for the one million people it has been feeding over the last year, half of Gaza’s population.

The UN stated that it has “more than 116,00 metric tonnes of food assistance – enough to feed a million people for up to four months – are ready and waiting to be brought into Gaza by WFP and partners as soon as borders reopen.”

The strikers want to bring awareness to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza with their hunger strike, and have their university take part in divesting from its contract with Israel-related companies. Since the destruction of the ceasefire, and in the last few weeks in particular, Israel has bombed Palestinians in refugee camps, which has accelerated the crisis, claiming the lives of countless civilians and destroying whatever little infrastructure remains.

On May 4th, the United Nations and its partners issued a warning of the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. For the ninth consecutive week, no aid has entered the Gaza Strip. Twenty-five bakeries were fully closed by March 31st because wheat flour and cooking oil ran out, and that same week, food parcels distributed to families went empty.

“Israel officials have sought to shut down the existing aid distribution system run by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners,” read the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs statement.

The CSU Long Beach administration contacted the strikers a few days after launching to set up a meeting, but nothing is currently scheduled. The students at Long Beach are prepared to continue their hunger strike indefinitely until their demands are met.

An attempt to reach CSULB President Jane Close Conoley was met with silence.

This piece first appeared on [Abraham Márquez’s Substack](#).

Abraham Márquez is an independent investigative journalist based in Los Angeles.

MAY 9, 2025