

May 21, 2026

OPEN LETTER TO CHANCELLOR JULIO FRENK FROM THE UCLA TASK FORCE ON ANTI-PALESTINIAN, ANTI-ARAB AND ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM

Re: May 14 “Initiative to Combat Antisemitism Publishes Roadmap to Fight Discrimination”

Dear Chancellor Frenk,

Following your announcement on May 14, 2026, [“Initiative to Combat Antisemitism Publishes Roadmap to Fight Discrimination,”](#) we write to remind you that your continuing silence on Anti-Palestinian, Anti-Arab and Anti-Muslim racism at UCLA is highly consequential and contributes to intensifying racism and violence against Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims and their allies, including Jews, on our campus. As our letters and reports show, we have tried for the past three years to bring documentary evidence of anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism to your attention. We have produced [three substantive reports](#) and sought often during the past three years to communicate the climate of entrenched and institutionalized anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racism at UCLA. Our [recommendations](#) have also been summarily dismissed, as have the recommendations of the [UCLA student body](#).

This institution appointed two nominally equal and parallel task forces, our own and another one meant to address antisemitism, which, in the glaring—even shocking—absence of any of UCLA’s internationally recognized scholars of Jewish history and the history of antisemitism and chaired instead by a business school specialist in real estate, quickly morphed into a body claiming to address “anti-Israel bias” as though that is the same as antisemitism. Despite their equal standing, you have made it abundantly clear that only one of these two task forces means anything to you.

Like that of your predecessor, former Chancellor Gene Block, your response to our reports’ documented accounts of racism and violence directed at Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims and allies has been an outright dismissal. Instead, you have made it clear that you will respond only to reports of “antisemitism” on campus, even when those reports clearly conflate criticism of the Israeli state with actual antisemitism. Indeed, as you informed the Task Force on Anti-Palestinian, Anti-Arab and Anti-Muslim Racism, you will not publicly acknowledge our existence nor respond to our reports; and when we met, you told us that you had not even read our reports. As we wrote to you on March 20, 2025, the asymmetry of your response to the two task forces is glaring *and highly consequential*.

Your 14 May announcement entrenches this discriminatory regime even further. You renew your pledge to translate into action the absurd, unscholarly and nakedly discriminatory recommendations of the Task Force to Combat Antisemitism and Anti-Israel bias, which

seek to codify the conflation of criticism of Israel with actual antisemitism. Importantly, you outline a regime of enforcement, identifying policies and practices that penalize protest (time, place and manner policies) and place politically-motivated limits on faculty expression and conduct as well as referring to the maliciously formulated so-called IHRA definition of antisemitism, whose precursor was developed in consultation with the Israeli government precisely in order to suppress criticism of Israel in Western societies—the reason it was dropped by the European Union shortly after it was first formulated.

Ignoring our reports, elevating the antisemitism task force, and creating/deepening a punishment infrastructure meant to suppress pro-Palestinian advocacy contributes to a hostile work environment at UCLA. Escalating forms of prohibition, interdiction, suppression, censorship and intimidation for those who teach Palestine, especially racialized minorities, transform the classroom into a site of surveillance and punishment. As documented in our third report, the silencing of the Palestinian narrative by an organized group of faculty seriously limits academic freedom to work on Palestine and speak freely on Palestinian rights without fear of repression or punishment. Not only have you done very little to protect students and faculty targeted by internal faculty and outside groups, you have actively encouraged this kind of targeting, including an endorsement of the Anti-Defamation League, one of the most vigorously anti-Palestinian organizations in the nation and a group that over 300 progressive organizations and [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) have accused of undermining civil rights.

“One UCLA”, a phrase you keep repeating, clearly does not include Muslims, Arabs, Palestinians and anyone who engages in a criticism of the Israeli state. If you fail to protect the communities on whose behalf we speak, we note that the consequences of that failure are continuing racism and racial violence. Silence on the matter is not only complicity with those who are racist and violent but incentive to engage in racist conduct. Racists know by your silence that the racism and violence against Palestinians, Muslims and Arabs is authorized at UCLA and beyond. From the mob violence directed at students and faculty at the UCLA encampment to their continuing surveillance and harassment, punishment of those who speak out about UCLA’s complicity in the genocide of Palestinians, and the ever-increasing restrictions on academic freedom announced in your recent memo, UCLA has been and remains one of the most illiberal and violent spaces for Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims and those in solidarity with them, including many Jews. As violence escalates throughout the country against Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims, including most recently the killing of [three Muslims at a San Diego mosque](#), UCLA has the most profound moral obligation to respond to the racism and racial violence directed at *all* members of the UCLA community and beyond.

Signed:

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