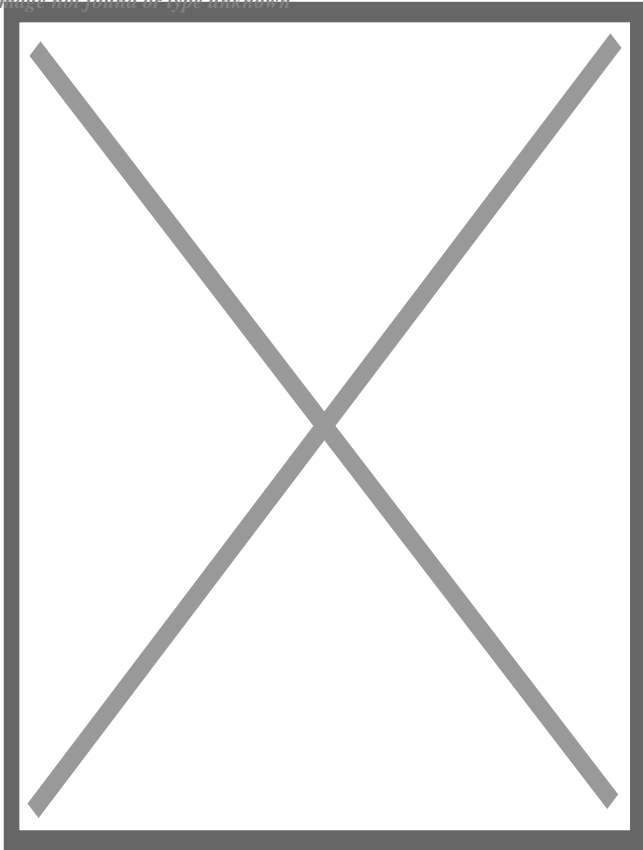


Detained student Mahmoud Khalil says Columbia University laid groundwork for his abduction

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Columbia University graduate Mahmoud Khalil

New York, April 7 (RHC)-- Columbia University graduate Mahmoud Khalil, who was detained for leading pro-Palestine protests last month, says the institution laid the ground for his “abduction,” urging its student body not to “abdicate their responsibility to resist repression” and continue demonstrations.

The prominent pro-Palestinian student activist and U.S. Green Card holder made the remarks in an op-ed titled "A Letter to Columbia," published by the student newspaper the Columbia Daily Spectator on Saturday.

"Columbia has suppressed student dissent under the auspices of combating anti-Semitism," Khalil said, adding that "anyone who has truly engaged with the movement knows that claims that its goals and purpose are rooted in anti-Semitism are mere fabrication."

He went on to say that since his abduction on March 8th, "the intimidation and kidnapping of international students who stand for Palestine has only accelerated," noting that the logic used by the federal government to target him and his peers is "a direct extension of Columbia's repression playbook concerning Palestine."

Khalil also noted that "in the 18 months since the genocidal campaign in Gaza began, Columbia has not only refused to acknowledge the lives of Palestinians sacrificed for Zionist settler colonialism, but it has actively reproduced the language used to justify this killing."

He further called on his peers to continue pro-Palestine protests, saying: "It is incumbent upon each of you to reclaim the University and join the student movement to carry forward the work of the past year."

"To the students who remain apathetic to Columbia's disregard for human life and its willingness to discard student safety: As pressure from the federal government intensifies, know that your neutrality on Palestine will not protect you," Khalil said.

In the op-ed, he also named other students who have been arrested and are facing deportation, including Tufts University doctoral student Rumeysa Ozturk.

Khalil was arrested by immigration authorities on March 8th in New York, reportedly based on a State Department order to revoke his green card. He is now being detained at the Central Louisiana ICE Processing Center and is fighting US President Donald Trump's administration's efforts to deport him.

Khalil's detention has sparked protests and alarm among free speech advocates, who argue that he is being unlawfully targeted for his activism, with his lawyers contending that the Trump administration is using rarely invoked legal provisions to deport him, although he is not being charged with a crime.

A federal judge has temporarily blocked his deportation while the legal challenge is pending.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES]

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/380286-detained-student-mahmoud-khalil-says-columbia-university-laid-groundwork-for-his-abduction>



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