# Israeli Students in Massachusetts and Australia Face Ostracism Amid Israel-Hamas Conflict Tensions



In recent developments, Jewish Israeli students at several Massachusetts colleges, including Northeastern University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), have reported feeling ostracized and fearful due to heightened tensions since the Israel-Hamas conflict reignited on October 7, 2022.

Shira Ashkenazi, an Israeli American Northeastern student, shared her experiences of being viewed negatively due to her nationality. She fears classmates consider her morally compromised because of the actions of the Israeli government. Similarly, Eitan Moore, an MIT student and co-president of the MIT Israel Alliance, noted an increase in hostility towards Jewish and Israeli students, describing the campus atmosphere as increasingly vilifying.

Protests calling for an end to the war in Gaza and criticizing Israel’s occupation of the West Bank have become common. Some demonstrators advocate for the dissolution of Israel, using chants like “intifada revolution,” which many Israelis interpret as supporting violence against civilians. This slogan, common in protests, evokes memories of the Palestinian uprisings that included attacks on Israeli civilians.

Notably, Northeastern student Liat Weiss recounted how friendships have changed and how classmates have labeled her and others as “genocide supporters” for their Israeli identity. Concerns extend to faculty as well, with over 30 Northeastern professors expressing solidarity with Palestinian advocacy, a stance some Israeli students find contentious.

The issue extends beyond campuses. In Australia, Western Australia Senator Fatima Payman diverged from party lines on Nakba Day, marking the creation of Israel in 1948. Payman called Israel’s actions in Gaza genocide and criticized Prime Minister Anthony Albanese for not taking stronger actions against Israel. She urged for sanctions, divestment, and recognition of a Palestinian state. Albanese, however, reaffirmed his commitment to a two-state solution and opposed boycotts as counterproductive and discriminatory.

These developments illustrate the deepening divide and the complex, often hostile environment faced by Israeli students abroad and the international political ramifications of the ongoing conflict.