



Columbia activists protest Israel president's commencement speech

## Description

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israel president herzog

Approximately 40 Columbia University activists protested outside the Jewish Theological Seminary on May 19th as Israel President [Isaac Herzog](#) delivered a virtual commencement address.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog delivered a virtual address at the Jewish Theological Seminary's 2026 commencement May 19, calling for stronger ties between the Jewish diaspora and Israel as dozens of protesters gathered outside to denounce his involvement.

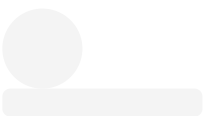
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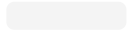
â?? Columbia Daily Spectator (@ColumbiaSpec) [May 29, 2026](#)

According to *Columbia Daily Spectator*:

Herzog had originally planned to speak in person, but JTS [announced](#) May 14 that he would instead deliver a prerecorded address due to unspecified circumstances that prevented his travel to New York City. His selection as commencement speaker drew backlash from pro-Palestinian Columbia affiliates and [sparked](#) some internal debate within the JTS community.

The protests were led by a few grassroots groups in New York, including Palestine Youth Movement NYC and the Columbia Intifada:





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A post shared by Columbia Intifada (@thecolumbiaintifada)

## Israel impunity

Their callout for the protest was a summary of Herzog's genocidal actions:

Herzog oversees the indiscriminate bombardment, deliberate starvation, and state-sanctioned murder of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in Gaza, the acceleration of new settlements and armed settler violence in East Jerusalem and the occupied West Bank, the rapid curtailing of the civil rights of Palestinian citizens of the Zionist entity, and bombing campaigns in Lebanon, Iran, Syria, and Yemen. In the wake of the "Israeli" Occupation Forces (IOF) ground offensive in Gaza in October 2023, Herzog actively encouraged the annihilation of the Palestinian people, stating: "It is an entire nation out there that is

responsible.â?•

Earlier this year, when Herzog visited Australia, he was met with a big protest against his visit.

A massive protest against the visit of Israeli President Herzog to Australia  
<pic.twitter.com/0mIUOhqyrI>

â?? Ounka (@OunkaOnX) [February 9, 2026](#)

People are making it clear that war criminals arenâ??t welcome anywhere.

Featured image via [Getty/Martin Ollman](#)

By [The Canary](#)

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