

# ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION of NORTH AMERICA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **IONA Condemns Misconduct Charges Against Student Activist at Wayne State University Calls for Protection of Free Speech and Moral Courage**

[WARREN, MI] – Today, Imam Mustapha Elturk, Ameer of the Islamic Organization of North America (IONA), stands in solidarity with the Interfaith Action for Palestine coalition of religious and community leaders who gathered at Wayne State University’s “W” to demand the immediate dismissal of misconduct charges against a student activist involved in peaceful protests for Palestinian human rights.

The student, whose identity has not been disclosed, is reportedly facing disciplinary action that could result in suspension, expulsion, or loss of scholarships—simply for their role in organizing nonviolent demonstrations calling on the university to divest from companies profiting from the war in Gaza.

“This charge represents a troubling suppression of peaceful student activism and a betrayal of the university’s stated commitment to justice and open discourse,” said Imam Steve Mustapha Elturk, president of IONA and co-chair of the Imams Council of Michigan. “Rather than engaging in a meaningful way with students’ moral and legitimate demands to end university complicity in funding genocide, the administration has chosen intimidation, punishment, and silencing. This is unacceptable.”

IONA affirms that standing up for justice, peace, and human dignity is not misconduct—it is moral courage. The student in question has been described by religious leaders as a compassionate and principled leader, known for their integrity and commitment to justice.

The university’s actions come in the wake of nationwide concern over the crackdown on student dissent and peaceful pro-Palestinian activism, including alarming reports of surveillance and police aggression. On May 30, 2024, Wayne State’s campus witnessed the violent removal of a peaceful protest encampment by police in riot gear, during which several students were arrested, and one woman’s hijab was forcibly removed.

“Let it be clear,” Elturk added. “Standing for peace and opposing genocide is not misconduct—it is a moral courage. We urge Wayne State University to drop all charges, honor its stated values, and protect the rights of all students to peacefully advocate for justice.”

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<https://www.fox2detroit.com/news/faith-leaders-call-charges-be-dropped-wayne-state-student-organizer>



IONA’s mission is to transform its members and help transform the surrounding communities to righteous, God-fearing people, who collectively strive for the highest moral standard and constantly seek forgiveness from our Creator to earn His pleasure. We seek His compassion and mercy in this life and in the hereafter. We rejuvenate our soul through internal struggle and spiritual exercise in worship of our creator God. The strength of our belief in God gives us the courage to establish good and forbid evil, thus promoting a system of justice for all mankind.