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## Thousands rally in Washington to demand end to Gaza genocide



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Washington, DC – Thousands gathered in Washington, DC, on Saturday to demand an end to Israel’s assault on Gaza and the U.S. government’s crackdown on pro-Palestinian activists. The rally, supported by over 300 organizations, brought demonstrators together at 3rd Street NW and Pennsylvania Avenue NW, before marching to key locations, including the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters.

Protesters called for the release of detained pro-Palestinian students and activists, including Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil and Turkish student Rumeysa Ozturk. The event, co-sponsored by groups like the Palestinian Youth Movement, Jewish Voice for Peace, and the ANSWER Coalition, aimed to highlight civil liberties violations under the Trump administration. Participants held signs showing Palestinian children killed in Gaza and detained students, condemning what they called the criminalization of pro-Palestinian activism. Ann Wright, a former U.S. diplomat and Code Pink member, expressed horror at the treatment of students advocating for Palestinian rights, citing arrests and deportations.

Mahmoud Khalil, a recent Columbia University graduate and green card holder, became a symbol of the movement after his detention for organizing campus protests. Suzanne Ali, a member of the Palestinian Youth Movement, emphasized the movement's resilience, saying the ongoing repression only strengthens their resolve.

The rally, attended by people from all over the U.S., was deeply personal for many. Participants, like Joni Nacef, who has been advocating for Palestine for over 40 years, shared their pain over the worsening situation.

The march was part of a nationwide day of action, with similar protests across the country, calling for justice for Palestine and an end to oppression.