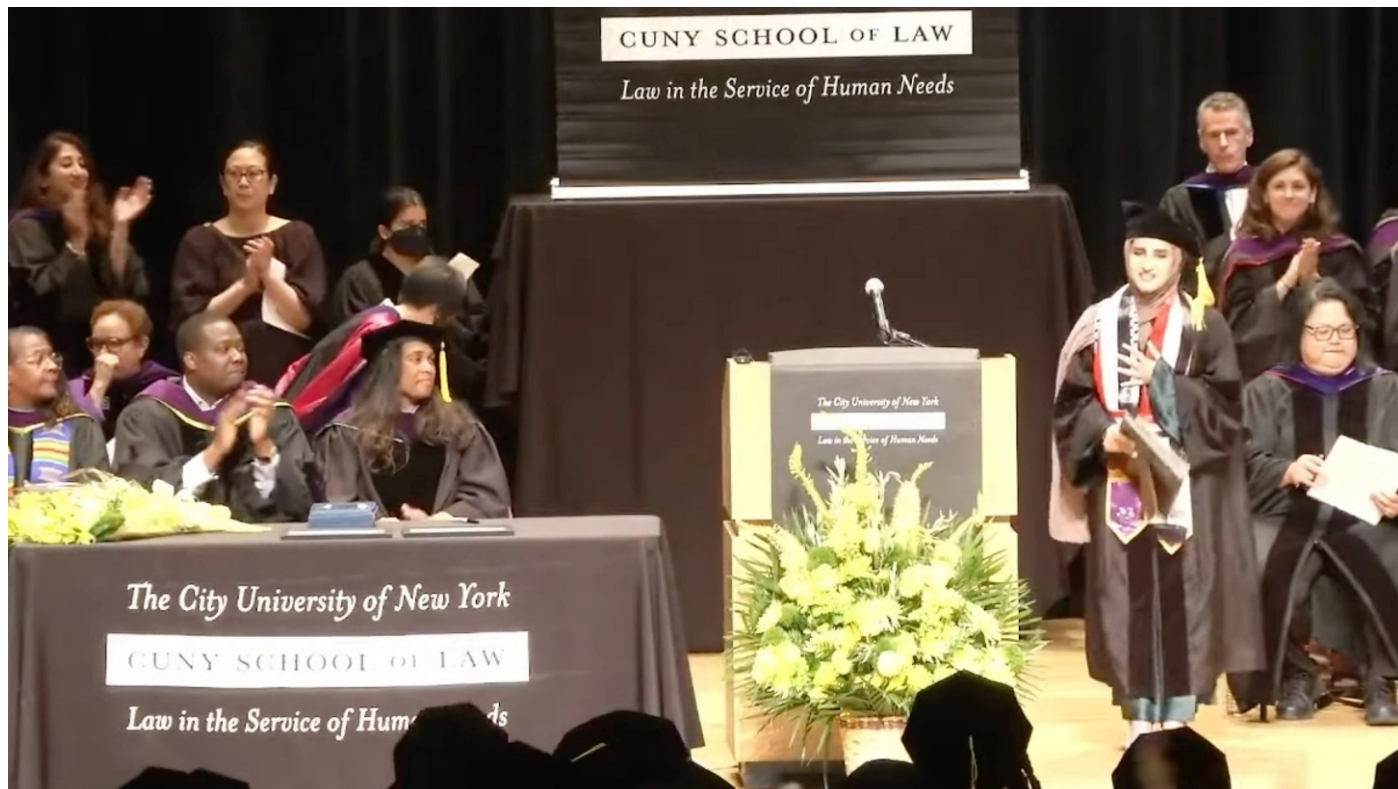


CUNY Law Dean Faces Calls for Termination by Jewish Leaders over Controversial Speech



Jewish activists are preparing to lead a protest outside the City University of New York (CUNY) chancellor's office, demanding accountability for the dean of CUNY Law School. The dean is being criticized for providing a platform to whose speech has been described as filled with hate, dangerous anti-Israel, anti-American, and antisemitic rhetoric. The rally, organized by the End Jew Hatred movement and scheduled for Wednesday evening in midtown Manhattan, garnered support from Americans Against Antisemitism, former Democratic New York State Assemblyman Dov Hikind, and social media influencer Elizabeth Savetsky.

Former Assemblyman Hikind, emphasizing the need to take action against Jew-hatred, called for the termination of Dean Sudha Setty and any CUNY professors who endorsed the speech. He highlighted the opportunity to demand the law school dean who allowed the dissemination of vile hatred by Fatima Mohammed during her commencement address. The speech targeted the NYPD, the US military, and Israel, containing vicious and malicious remarks that hate speech by the CUNY board.

Fatima Mousa Mohammed's controversial May 12 speech called for a "revolution" against what she perceived as the legal system's "white supremacy." She launched scathing attacks on the city police and the US military and accused indiscriminate murder. Mohammed alleged that the school continued to train Israeli soldiers to carry out global violence.

Criticism of Mohammed's speech has ignited a fierce debate over issues such as free speech, the appropriateness of the venue, and the use of public funds. Congressman Ritchie Torres expressed disbelief at the extent of hatred in someone's speech. Meanwhile, three attorney groups sent a letter to the American Bar Association (ABA), arguing that Mohammed's speech violated ABA standards and should be condemned.

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In a separate letter, the National Jewish Advocacy Center, The International Legal Forum, and the American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists contended that Zionism was an essential component of Judaism for the majority. They claimed that Mohammed's speech had enabled abuse against Jewish students and cited instances of "Zionists not welcome" sentiments directed at Jewish students. The letter also criticized the BDS movement, which was CUNY Law on a student and faculty level, accusing it of promoting discriminatory boycotts and having ties to Palestinian terrorist organizations.

A report released prior to the commencement speech accused CUNY of being the most systemically antisemitic school in the United States in the past two years. Compiled by Students and Faculty for Equality at CUNY (SAFE CUNY), the report alleged deep-rooted, systemic antisemitism within the university, facilitated by lies, cover-ups, retaliation campaigns, intimidation against whistleblowers, and corruption.

CUNY has faced previous allegations of antisemitic activity, with incidents dating back to 2013 listed in a Title VI complaint filed by The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLU) last year. The complaint claimed that CUNY ignored a pattern of antisemitic activity, including instances of swastikas carved on school property. Rafaella Gunz, a former CUNY student who left the institution due to what she described as a toxic antisemitic environment, recounted her exclusion from the Jewish community at CUNY Law for not fully endorsing the Palestinian cause.

In recent years, controversies at CUNY included inviting Nerdeen Kiswani, founder of the anti-Israel group Within Our Lifetime (WOL), to give the CUNY Law graduation commencement speech. Kiswani has been criticized in the past for threats and controversial statements. Additionally, in 2017, CUNY invited Linda Sarsour, known for her antisemitic comments and support for anti-Israel sentiment, to deliver a commencement address despite petitions urging her removal.

The protest, led by Jewish activists, seeks to hold CUNY Law and its dean accountable for allowing a platform to disseminate what many consider hate speech. The incident has reignited the debate on free speech, the limits of academic freedom, and the responsibility of institutions to address antisemitism.