

Solidarity with Professor Joseph Daher

written by Tempest | February 21, 2025



Sign and share the petition. Reposted from *Tempest*.

We offer our support and full solidarity to Prof. Joseph Daher, who is subjected to an arbitrary procedure by the University of Lausanne (UNIL) rectorate: the alleged non-renewal of his contract (signed in May 2024) as a Visiting Professor for the spring semester 2025. This sudden, unjustified and unfounded position deprives his students of his teaching at UNIL, despite the fact that his seminar course entitled “History of International Relations Post-1945” has been on the syllabus for months. Students working on their masters’ dissertations under his supervision have also been deprived of his supervision overnight, which is intolerable.

This arbitrary procedure, which also deprives him of the financial resources associated with his commitment, follows months of relentlessness against Joseph Daher by UNIL management. Such administrative relentlessness is a source of concern for all other UNIL employees, thereby creating an environment where no one is safe. This is even more worrying as UNIL Management has not provided any protection to Prof. Daher against the smear campaign he has been subjected to for several months in the French- and German-speaking Swiss press in connection with his defense of fundamental rights and his commitment to supporting the demands of UNIL students mobilized around the Palestinian cause.

Prof. Joseph Daher is an internationally recognized scholar of Middle Eastern political history. The author of several books on Middle Eastern societies, he holds two doctorates (one in political science from UNIL, the other in development sciences from London’s renowned School of Oriental and African Studies). He has taught at several European universities (Ghent and Paris-Dauphine) and for several years was visiting professor at the prestigious European University Institute in Florence. He is also involved in numerous study and consultancy missions for various international organizations, NGOs and research institutes. His expertise is regularly sought by the international media.

The sidelining of the Prof. Daher is part of a wider political context of pressure and repression against scholars involved in solidarity with the Palestinian cause. The chronology of events clearly indicates this, particularly in relation to the occupation of the Géopolis building in UNIL last May by students demanding transparency on partnerships with universities in Israel and the suspension of these agreements in the name of the precautionary principle. We are currently facing serious violations of the fundamental principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression, principles which are under threat, as highlighted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Farida Shaheen, in her report “Principles for the implementation of the right to academic freedom” as well as by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, Gina Romero, as consigned in her recommendations to universities in the context of the ongoing mobilization on Palestine.

We therefore are expressing our deepest outrage and indignation. The measures taken by UNIL’s

management align on the long series of national and international attacks on the freedom to think, teach, research and learn that have affected and continue to affect teachers, researchers and students. They threaten the fundamental democratic rights of all.

As a result, we demand the immediate reinstatement of our colleague Joseph Daher to his teaching and duties within the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at UNIL.