

December 4, 2018

Richard M. Englert
President of Temple University
Second Floor, Sullivan Hall
1330 Polett Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Temple Board of Trustees
Office of the Secretary
3 Mezzanine, Sullivan Hall
1330 W. Polett Walk
Philadelphia, PA 19122

Dear President Englert and Board of Trustees:

The American Anthropological Association (AAA) urges the administration at Temple University to exercise restraint and a reasonable adherence to the basic principles of academic freedom in adjudicating the situation of Marc Lamont Hill, an anthropologist at the university, regarding the recent speech he gave during the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People at the UN.

College and university teachers are community members, members of a learned profession, and affiliates of educational institutions. When they express their personal views as individual community members, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline. Any commitment to academic freedom implies that no sanctions or punishments be imposed on any faculty member for expressing their political views and moral convictions, and that any procedure against a faculty member follow the [due-process guidelines established by the American Association of University Professors](#) (AAUP).

The AAA is the world's largest professional and scholarly society for our field. Founded in 1902 and currently with 10,000 members worldwide, we are dedicated to supporting the development and dissemination of anthropological knowledge, and to applying this knowledge in helping solve human problems. At the heart of anthropological knowledge is open inquiry that illuminates the patterns and processes of culture, past and present. Academic freedom is the lynchpin to open inquiry.

Temple University was correct in acknowledging that Hill "has a constitutionally protected right to express his opinion as a private citizen." Freedom of academic inquiry is a cornerstone of democracy and a necessary element of a free society. Everyone—including elected officials as well as administrators at all levels of higher education—has an obligation to preserve, protect and promote the pursuit of knowledge and the free exchange of ideas.

Sincerely,



Dr. Alex Barker
President, AAA

CC: Anne K. Nadol
Gloria Frager