

## **Cornell Student Faces Deportation as Retaliation for Pro-Palestine Activism**

By Peoples Dispatch

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Cornell University has retaliated against graduate worker Momodou Taal following Palestine solidarity action and his leading role in organizing efforts over the last year

A Cornell University graduate worker is facing deportation after being targeted by university officials for Palestine solidarity organizing. The Cornell community is rallying behind British-Gambian international student Momodou Taal, who was suspended by the university on Monday, September 25 following his participation in a pro-Palestine action on campus.

“They will claim it’s not a deportation but effectively it is,” Taal stated, sharing a screenshot he received from a university official stating that his academic suspension will affect his F-1 visa status.

“For students who have been suspended or discontinued from their academic program by their academic department or Cornell University, then our office is required to close the student’s F-1 record,” the email reads. “Closure of your F-1 record affects the student’s ability to remain or enter the US in F-1 status. There is no grace period for exiting the US. If the student is in the US, then they should exit as soon as possible or work with a licensed immigration lawyer to change their immigration status to another appropriate status.”

“Everyday we witness the horrors that Israel inflicts on people. And those of us who still have our humanity and are rightly incensed at what we see... Are facing so much repression,” Taal wrote on X. “You’d never think these institutions are responding to people protesting a genocide.”

Taal and other pro-Palestine student organizers successfully shut down a career fair at Cornell last week, which was attended by defense contractors L3Harris and Boeing. Cornell students have joined the demand of the student movement across the country for their universities to divest from corporations complicit in Israel’s genocide in Gaza, which includes weapons manufacturers.

A petition has circulated calling for Taal’s reinstatement. “This is the first time a Cornell graduate worker is facing immediate deportation without administrative due process or the ability to review evidence of their alleged misconduct. His is the first time a Cornell graduate worker is facing immediate deportation without administrative due process or the ability to review evidence of their alleged misconduct,” the petition states. “Unless we stand up to the university, it is entirely plausible that at any moment, Momodou will have less than a 48 hours notice to book a flight, pack up all of his belongings, and get out of the country.”

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