

UK Judge Rules in Favour of University Professor David Miller Sacked for Anti-Zionist Views

Academic David Miller was dismissed from the University of Bristol in 2021. Lawyers say the new ruling marks a 'significant triumph' for free speech in the workplace

By [Middle East Eye](#)

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A [UK](#) judge on Monday ruled in a landmark decision that David Miller, a professor of political sociology, who was fired from the University of Bristol in 2021 for anti-Zionist views, was unfairly dismissed and subjected to discrimination.

[Rahman Lowe Solicitors](#), Miller's representatives, called the judgment a "significant triumph", establishing that anti-Zionist beliefs are legally protected in the workplace.

"Prof. Miller successfully claimed discrimination based on his philosophical belief that Zionism is inherently racist, imperialist, and colonial, a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, alongside a finding of unfair dismissal," a statement from the solicitors said.

"This judgment establishes for the first time ever that anti-Zionist beliefs are protected in the workplace," they added.

The judgment found that Miller had experienced discrimination based on his philosophical belief and had been unfairly dismissed by Bristol University.

The decision was hailed by free speech advocates, [with one commentator calling it](#) a "key victory for free speech and academic freedom".

The case has gathered widespread attention in recent years, particularly from academics and individuals advocating for justice, fairness and equality in Palestine.

Anti-Israel Criticism

David Miller was dismissed in 2021 after accusing Israel of wanting to “impose [its] will all over the world”.

Following his dismissal, he launched employment tribunal proceedings claiming unfair dismissal, breach of contract and discrimination or victimisation on grounds of religion or belief.

At his hearing he made clear that anti-Zionism was not the same as antisemitism, and was not a “racist set of ideas”.

Rahman Lowe Secures Landmark Victory in Employment Case for Professor David Miller Against Bristol University. Tribunal finds that anti-Zionist beliefs are protected in the workplace. [@Tracking_Power](#) [#Discrimination](#) [#AntiZionism](#) [#Belief](#) [#Palestine](#) <https://t.co/7q2hztA75b>

— Rahman Lowe Solicitors (@RahmanLowe) [February 5, 2024](#)

He added that it was impossible for a Zionist state such as Israel to be non-racist, and described Gaza as an “open air prison”.

Rahman Lowe’s partner Zillur Rahman, who represented Miller, called it a “landmark case” which “marks a pivotal moment in the history of our country for those who believe in upholding the rights of Palestinians”.

“The timing of this judgment will be welcomed by many who at present are facing persecution in their workplaces for speaking out against the crimes of the Israeli state, and the genocide taking place in Gaza,” he added.

I am also very proud that we have managed to establish that anti-Zionist views qualify as a protected belief under the UK Equality Act,”

Miller responded to the decision saying that he hopes it would become a touchstone precedent in all future battles that people face with “the racist and genocidal ideology of Zionism and the movement to which it is attached”.

“I am extremely pleased that the Tribunal has concluded that I was unfairly and wrongfully dismissed by the University of Bristol. I am also very proud that we have managed to establish that anti-Zionist views qualify as a protected belief under the UK Equality Act,” he said.

“The University of Bristol maintained that I was sacked because Zionist students were offended by my various remarks, but it was plain from the evidence of its own witnesses that this was untrue, and it was the anti-Zionist nature of my comments which was the decisive factor,” he added.

‘Disappointed’ and ‘Dangerous’

The judgment was criticised by the Union of Jewish Students, a national body representing university Jewish societies and Jewish students. It noted that despite finding in favour of

Miller, the tribunal found he had contributed to his own dismissal and was “culpable and blameworthy”.

“UJS believes this may set a dangerous precedent about what can be lawfully said on campus about Jewish students and the societies at the centre of their social life. This will ultimately make Jewish students less safe.”

In a statement, the University of Bristol said it was disappointed by the judgment and was reviewing the tribunal’s findings carefully.

It said: “After a full investigation and careful deliberation, the University concluded that Dr Miller did not meet the standards of behaviour we expect from our staff in relation to comments he made in February 2021 about students and student societies linked to the University. As a result and considering our responsibilities to our students and the wider University community, his employment was terminated.

“We recognise that these matters have caused deep concern for many, and that members of our community hold very different views from one another.

“We would, therefore, encourage everyone to respond in a responsible and sensitive way in the current climate.

“The University of Bristol remains committed to fostering a positive working and learning environment that enriches lives and where the essential principles of academic freedom are preserved.”

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Featured image: David Miller’s sacking was based on his opinion that Zionism is ‘inherently racist’ (Screengrab/YouTube)

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