

SIGS Statement on January 6th Capitol Attack

The School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies (SIGS) community watched in horror on January 6, 2021 as a violent, white-supremacist mob invaded the United States Capitol in an attempt to overturn the 2020 presidential election results. Political violence is abhorrent, and we condemn it in the strongest terms possible. As an academic unit, SIGS is committed to diversity of thought and free expression. Therefore, we also condemn the political leaders and members of the media who incited this insurrection. Encouraging political violence is antithetical to freedom of thought, democratic values, and the rule of law. The people who incited and participated in this riot must be held accountable.

Moreover, as academics, we strongly condemn political leaders lying to the American public about the 2020 election outcome. The facts here are indisputable. There was no evidence of widespread election fraud, and there is no dispute over the results. As part of our intellectual mission, SIGS must stand for truth and against the promulgation of lies and conspiracies. Accepting election results and the peaceful transfer of power are essential to the American political system.

Furthermore, pursuant to our mission's emphasis on "citizenship, justice, and identity in a global context," SIGS has consistently spoken out against systemic racism in the United States. We are thus outraged by the obvious and disturbing dichotomy between how law enforcement treated peaceful Black Lives Matter protestors and how they treated these white-supremacist, violent insurrectionists. While we honor the numerous Capitol Police officers, Washington, DC Metro Police officers, and National Guard troops who bravely fought the mob, we are profoundly concerned that the law enforcement presence at this riot was grossly insufficient.

In closing, SIGS will take this opportunity to redouble our commitment to anti-racism and anti-bigotry. The insurrectionists' hateful iconography, including confederate flags, gallows, and anti-Semitic slogans, was indeed troubling. Unfortunately, this type of violent white supremacy was not an isolated incident. American history is replete with organized violence against minorities. SIGS looks forward to working with our partners in the university and the larger community to build a just society free of violence, anti-democratic forces, hatred, and prejudice.