

1 **Statement of Solidarity with Jawaharlal Nehru University, India – by the**
2 **Professional Staff Congress, the City University of New York faculty and staff**
3 **union (PSC-CUNY)**

4 PSC-CUNY stands in solidarity with the students, faculty and staff of Jawaharlal
5 Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, India, in their struggle against state repression of
6 political speech.

7 We condemn the arrest of JNU student union President, Kanhaiya Kumar, on
8 charges of sedition and the expulsion of eight students by the university
9 administration. The students are being persecuted by the Indian government and
10 the university administration for participating in a rally protesting state policies and
11 actions. It is a gross abuse of power for a democratic state to punish its citizens for
12 exercising their right to political dissent.

13 JNU is not a stand-alone incident; the recent attacks on students at other
14 universities, like Jadavpur, and University of Hyderabad where it led to the tragic
15 suicide of Dalit activist, Rohith Vemula, are part of a pattern of harassment and
16 repression. We believe that the targeting of politically active youth at public
17 universities reveals the broader program of the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) to push
18 its neoliberal attack on the poor, its discriminatory agenda against minorities, its
19 promotion of a hawkish foreign policy, and its squelching of political dissent.

20 We, at the City University of New York, and our fellow academics at universities
21 throughout the USA appreciate the dangers of stifling academic freedom through
22 our own destructive history. Our union is committed to fighting against class
23 oppression, racism, and sexism, and to vigorously defend the right to political
24 opposition.

25 We join faculty and students from across the world - including University of
26 Texas, Doctoral Students Council, CUNY, Purdue University, Williams College in
27 the US, Canadian universities, University of Leuven, Belgium, University of
28 Oxford, UK, Bangalore Research Network, Tata Institute of Social Sciences and
29 University of Hyderabad in India - to express our solidarity with the students and
30 faculty at JNU. We call upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi to immediately cease
31 the pattern of persecution at universities. We also call on the Vice Chancellor of
32 JNU to drop all punitive measures against the students engaged in protests, and to
33 demand the immediate release of Kanhaiya Kumar.