In light of recent reports related to the University concerning the visit of Professor Muhammad Dajani with a group of students to Auschwitz last month, the Administration feels it necessary to clarify the following facts:

1. Professor Dajani has served in recent years as Director of the American Studies Program and, more recently as Chief Librarian at the University. Upon his return from abroad in mid-May, he submitted a letter stating his wish to resign from his posts at the University, effective end of May.
2. On the 18th May, and immediately upon receiving the letter of resignation, both the University President as well as the Executive Vice President held an emergency meeting with him in order to inquire about the reasons for the resignation. On being told by him that he did not feel that the University Administration has given him the support required in the face of actions taken against him by the Employees’ and Student Unions –the former had issued a decision suspending his membership in the Union, while the latter issued various leaflets condemning the visit- Professor Dajani was assured that the Administration had acted promptly to deal with these actions, even during his absence, first to make the Employees’ Union rescind its decision, and second to ensure that the Student Union would not take further action against him. It was made clear to both of these bodies that their actions conflicted with the University’s message upholding individual freedoms. The Administration also appointed two security guards to accompany him while on campus. These two security guards stayed close to him for the entire period since the said meeting, in order to give him a further sense of security.
3. As part of the misinformation that was spread and related to the event, the claim in some reports was made that, by not standing behind Professor Dajani’s program with the students who visited Aushwitz, Al Quds University had failed to uphold the principle of ‘academic freedom’, interpreted in this case to mean standing by its professors to run their courses as they saw best. The Administration wishes in this regard to make clear that the visit was not part of any program or course Professor Dajani was teaching at the University. As said earlier, it was a private initiative by a totally separate NGO, unrelated to the American Studies program or courses which Professor Dajani normally teaches. The Administration does not interfere with its professors’ programs or courses, or their extra-curricular activities, unless of course the law is infringed upon. Furthermore, it is important also to clarify that the University, once apprized of his intentions to make the visit, did not raise any objections to that visit, asking only that it be made clear this was not a University initiative or program.
4. The University wishes to express its sadness for losing a professor like Dajani in the wake of the unfortunate reactions that followed the said visit to Auschwitz, and would have been happier had he withdrawn his letter of resignation. However, if on the one hand it is comforted by the fact that these negative reactions did not become physical, it is nonetheless cognizant of the fact that, in the prevalent political climate, anything at all is possible, and that the ultimate decision for any professor holding politically unpopular views has therefore to rest with the person himself. (The University denies categorically in this regard another report that mentioned that one of the University Deans was physically assaulted for being involved in collaborative research projects with Israeli counterparts).