



November 2, 2023

Dear colleagues,

We, members of the Israel Young Academy (IYA), write to you with a heavy heart in light of the war that has been raging in our region following the October 7 massacre committed by Hamas. During this massacre, over 1400 Israelis, including women, children, and the elderly, were murdered, raped, tortured, and mutilated, and over 200 were abducted, all within a single day. As Israel carries out its moral obligation to protect its citizens from further attacks, we are deeply saddened by the death of thousands of innocent Palestinians and the uprooting of countless others.

As ripples of the October 7 atrocities affect academic campuses worldwide, we approach you with a request to uphold the core values of academia. Israeli academia has been addressing the danger to these values in the context of both internal and external conflicts. Academics have taken a lead role in the battle to [protect Israel's democracy](#) against attempts to erode the foundations of evidence-based science, critical thinking, diversity and inclusion, excellence, freedom of speech, equality and truth. Like other academic communities around the world, we have [assisted researchers fleeing the Russia-Ukraine war](#) in the name of these values.

In this vein, and following the [letter](#) issued by Professor David Harel, President of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, we seek your support in the following suggested actions of good will.

1. **Call for open, fact-based dialogue** in campuses, in sharp contrast to the poisonous, post-truth discourse on social media. Create a safe environment in your institutions for Israeli and Palestinian colleagues and students, allowing free speech, thoughtful exchange of opinions, and empathy towards both Palestinians and Israelis.
2. Scientific societies engaging in the study of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must, by their very definition, conduct fact-based, informed discourse of current events. If you engage in such discourse, **promote nuanced, informed, and compassionate discussions**. We ask that you emphatically **reject any form of support of terror organizations** who have taken hostage Israeli, Palestinian, and other civilians.
3. **Support research collaborations** with Israeli and Palestinian scholars, especially concerning medical, reconstruction, and conflict-resolution research. Advancing science and science-based policy in these fields is a top priority.
4. We welcome the opportunity of holding an **online meeting** with anyone interested in learning more about the Israeli academic community's response to this tragedy.

We thank you for considering these actions and look forward to strengthening our bonds of cooperation and understanding as we work together for a better world.

Sincerely,
The Steering Committee of Israel Young Academy
Itay Halevy (Chair)
Yael Allweil
Ruth Scherz-Shouval