



Dear members of the Hebrew University community,

Not many days have passed since we woke up on the morning of Saturday, October 7, 2023, to the atrocities committed by Hamas in the towns and kibbutzim surrounding Gaza. Over 1,200 women and men, children and old people, young and innocent adults were murdered with terrible cruelty. Over 100 were abducted and are being held captive in Gaza, including babies, children, and elderly adults – some of them Holocaust survivors. Tens of thousands of Israelis were injured physically and emotionally. In the days that followed we mourned with parents burying their sons and daughters; together with the families of the abducted, we carry a prayer, each in his or her own way, for a glimmer of hope and a sign of life from their missing loved ones.

Loss and grief, anxiety and despair, determination and hope, are shared as well by the entire Hebrew University community. This community, and indeed all of Israeli society, are flooded with difficult and powerful emotions.

The university refuses to condone statements from students, faculty, and employees – anywhere, media and platform, including social networks and WhatsApp groups – which support, encourage or voice words of praise or sympathy for terrorism, violence or killing people, and incite racism. There is no place for such expressions, which can potentially impact the balance of university life, among the university community. In order to review such statements and handle them according to our regulations, we are establishing a committee of four senior faculty members, who will seriously scrutinize each such case if and when they occur.

Incitement to racism may also manifest itself in other ways, which we cannot ignore. Periods of terrible bloodshed are also a test of the moral strength of our society, including the university community. Therefore, even as our blood boils, we are obliged to respect a variety of opinions. As a community and as individuals we must avoid manifestations of discrimination, racism, hatred, incitement and support for violence against minority groups. We must avoid generalizing and insulting comments and blaming members of the community, solely due to their belonging to a specific group.

Each and every one of us is called upon to marshal our strength, even during this bleak period, and to continue our behavior as humane individuals – this is our great power.

- Should anyone in our community feel a need for emotional support, we are operating a hotline run by the Dean of Students' psychological services as per this link: [השירות הפסיכולוגי | דיקנט](https://huji.ac.il/השירות_הפסיכולוגי_דיקנט) ([הסטודנטים](https://huji.ac.il/הסטודנטים))
- If you feel threatened in any way by content/discussions/messages, online or within the university, please alert the Department of Diversity at diversity_vp@savion.huji.ac.il.

With warm wishes and hope for better days,

Prof. Asher Cohen, President
Prof. Tamir Shaefer, Rector
Mr. Yishai Fraenkel, VP and Director General