



23th October 2023

To: **University of Cambridge:**

Prof. **Deborah Prentice** – Vice-Chancellor

Prof. **Bhaskar Vira** – Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education

Prof. **Kamal Munir** – Pro-Vice Chancellor – for Community and Engagement

**RE: The University of Cambridge's Messages to its Staff Members and Students
Concerning the Recent Events in Israel and Gaza**

Dear Professors,

We, members of [BaShaar](#) – Academic Community for Israeli Society^{*}, have just read the University's various messages regarding the recent events in Israel and Gaza (October 9th), as [still appearing](#) on the university's web site, as well as the [response message](#) to the open letter, and the '[Message](#) from the Vice-Chancellor' (October 12th).

We appreciate your intention in writing these messages. However, there is a major moral fault in your messages that we cannot accept: **the implied equivalence or symmetry you suggest between the two sides**. You refer generally to 'everyone affected by recent events in Israel, Gaza and the Middle East', to 'recent appalling events in Israel and Gaza' or 'the University's concern for all members of the University community'. You did not even mention Hamas by name nor deem it necessary to explicitly condemn the heinous atrocities committed by Hamas in Israel.

To date, on your website's [general message](#) there is still **no mention** of the brutal massacre and mass abductions by Hamas terrorists; not a single word expressing compassion for the victims of the brutal atrocities carried out by Hamas.

What has happened on October 7th is not another clash between Israel and Hamas. Hamas terrorists butchered and slaughtered more than 1000 civilians: old people, men, women, pregnant women, elderly, children and babies. Parents were tortured in front of their children, babies and children were tortured and their bodies mutilated. They were shot, beheaded, burned alive, women raped and then murdered, families burned and corpses then triumphantly displayed to cheering ecstatic crowds – all in the inhuman ISIS tradition. More than 200 Israelis were taken hostage, amongst them elderly sick people, men, women, children and babies and Hamas is cynically using them together with Gaza civilians as human shields. **This is PURE EVIL and one cannot and should not stay within the realm of "politically correctness" vis-a-vis these atrocities.**

What Hamas has done is similar to the atrocities committed by the Nazis against the Jews during the Holocaust or the atrocities of ISIS. Therefore, we find the absence of any condemnation, as well as the symmetry you present between both sides **morally wrong**.

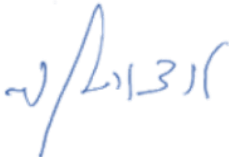
By failing to explicitly denounce these atrocities, you are effectively sending a message to villains around the world that they can continue their inhumane acts with impunity, as the world silently accepts it. We regret that this is your message to your staff and students.



There is a profound and moral difference between Israel's efforts to avoid harming civilians, and Hamas's deliberate strategy of targeting and inflicting terrible suffering upon as many civilians as possible in Israel as well as in Gaza. We deeply regret the loss of Palestinians innocent civilian lives in Gaza. We support a peaceful and just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; however, **one can support Palestinian rights and at the same time firmly denounce in a clear voice the inhuman brutality of Hamas.**

We urge you to re-think, rectify, take a morally clear stand and explicitly condemn Hamas' crimes against humanity.

Hoping for Better days,
Sincerely yours,



Dr. Vered Ariel Nahari
CEO, BaShaar

***BaShaar – Academic Community for Israeli Society** is an Israeli registered non-profit and non-government organization, established in 1999 by academic leaders amongst them the Ex-Presidents of the Technion and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. BaShaar lists over 2,000 senior faculty members from all institutions of higher education in Israel, including former presidents and rectors, Nobel Laureates, laureates of the Israel Prize and other prestige awards. BaShaar operates both as an Educational Framework and a as a platform for critical discussion and free debates on issues of higher education and the Israeli society.

<https://www.bashaar.org.il/about-bashaar/>