



November 19, 2023

To: **NTEU - National Tertiary Education Union**

Prof. **Alison Barnes** – NTEU National President  
Prof. **Damien Cahill** – General Secretary  
Prof. **Nick Riemer** – Branch President – The University of Sydney  
Mr. **David Gonzalez** – Branch President – The University of Melbourne

**RE: NTEU's Statements on Israel and Gaza**

We, members of '[BaShaar](https://www.bashaar.org.il) – Academic Community for Israeli Society'<sup>1</sup>, have read the NTEU email message that included the 'Palestine Solidarity Motion' (NTEU University of Sydney, attached), as well as your 2 statements: one dated [Oct. 20](#), indicating that the "NTEU joins the ITUC in condemning the brutal attacks on civilians in Israel and Gaza", and your recent "Palestine Solidarity statement" from [Oct 26](#) (NTEU University of Melbourne) in which you address various issues concerning the ongoing war in Gaza between Israel and Hamas. We find them all biased and inaccurate.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is very complex and cannot be regarded in a very simplistic and black and white way as portray in your statements.

It is very sad and deeply disturbing that your statements present an **equivalence or symmetry between the two sides**: Hamas monstrous atrocities in Israel on October 7th and the Israeli response-operation against Hamas which followed. Not a word of compassion toward the Israeli victims of the inhumane Hamas' massacre and the abduction of innocent civilians including babies, children and the elderly to Gaza.

You chose to use politically correct words "Just as we condemn Hamas's attacks on civilians..." while completely ignoring the horrible atrocities inflicted by Hamas. We are appalled by your lack of courage to condemn in the strongest possible terms Hamas's terrorists' horrible atrocities.

What has happened on October 7th in is not just "a brutal attack" as you symmetrically phrased it. Hamas terrorists butchered and slaughtered more than 1300 civilians in Israel: elderly, men, women, pregnant women, 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, fetuses cut brutally of their living pregnant mothers, women and young girls raped and then murdered, families burned and corpses then triumphantly displayed to cheering ecstatic crowds – all in the inhuman ISIS tradition. Two hundred forty 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. **Hamas' heinous atrocities of October 7 are PURE EVIL that any decent human being should not turn his back to like you, regrettably, did by not denouncing them in a strong and clear voice.**

War is a terrible thing and we grief the loss of life of innocent people, both Israelis and Palestinians, men women and children. Humanitarian support should be and is provided, and the Israeli army secures and protects civilian Gazans from Hamas violence on their way to the safe zone. Hamas, on the other hand, uses innocent civilians as human shields. It uses civilian institutions as bases to their terror operations and as storage places for arms. There is by now an ample of evidence how Hamas is using children's playgrounds, schools, hospitals and universities on ground and underground as terror bases, operational headquarters, arm factories and arm storerooms.

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<sup>1</sup> \***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, laurates 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/>



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.**

Hamas is a cruel, fanatic Islamic terror organization – that inflicts terrible suffering on innocent civilians in Gaza and Israel and calls for the destruction of the State of Israel – as is explicitly stated in [its charter](#): “Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it”. Hamas does not seek any compromise which will end the conflict. Hamas cannot and does not want to be a partner to any just and peaceful resolution of the conflict, which we strongly hope will follow after the war is over.

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

Hoping for Better days

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Shimon Yankielowicz  
Chairperson of the Forum  
for Higher Education, BaSahaar

Dr. Vered Ariel Nahari  
CEO, BaShaar