

# Collated responses to the Executive Statement

## **Sent before the Exec statement was posted:**

Dear President of the European Association of Social Anthropologists, Dr Ana Ivasiuc  
During the last 16 days, we witnessed the terrifying devastation of the Gaza Strip and the unprecedented massacre of its civil population, motivated by the deadly attacks perpetrated by Hamas on October 7th. Voices and images from Gaza show that Israel's response to the attack is increasingly taking on the appearance of a collective and disproportionate punishment for the Palestinian people as a whole, even reaching areas where Hamas is not established, such as the West Bank. Some experts are even considering applying the category of genocide, which is doubtlessly uncanny given that Israel draws its international legitimacy from the need to provide collective reparation for the genocide of the European Jewish population.

Hamas's unprecedented attack outside the Gaza wall brought terror and death to over a thousand Israelis. Israel's air strikes have already killed over 4,000 people, half of whom were children and are inflicting terrible suffering to a people who had virtually been imprisoned in Gaza for over 16 years and stripped of fundamental civil and human rights since the Nakba of 1948. Though none of us would ever advocate for the maintenance of the unbearable state of military colonisation brutally imposed on Palestinians until October 7th's attacks, it is clear that the present situation is throwing the entire region into a spiral of hate and violence that will disproportionately hit the Palestinian people, but also create extreme insecurity and social disruption to all the inhabitants of the region. Not to speak of the catastrophe which will represent the extension of the conflict due to the immense solidarity that the Palestinian cause elicits among millions of people in surrounding countries and worldwide.

As anthropologists, we cannot observe all this without taking a position. Words matter, as the EASA proved last year by immediately releasing a statement supporting Ukraine after the Russian invasion, which is still displayed on our association's website. Being a European association does not mean that conflicts outside Europe do not concern us, especially when they are byproducts of European colonial policies and directly concern the lives of millions of people in Europe. The failure of the international community in calling for an immediate ceasefire in Palestine after a US veto at the United Nations makes it even more urgent for academics and intellectuals to speak out: silence, now, is not neutral and represents a contribution to putting the lives of millions of people at risk. Demonstrations of thousands of Jews against the occupation in the US and worldwide are opening an essential space for interreligious and intercultural cooperation to overcome the present tragedy and prevent further escalation of this catastrophe. As professionals of culture and society, we must keep this space open with all our means.

We constitute a relatively small community of academics within a discipline concerned with human cohabitation oppression, and the voices and lives that are typically silenced or unheard. If we insist that "Anthropology matters", i.e., that our discipline must secure a presence in the public sphere, especially in times of crisis, we need to go beyond the paralysis that this terrible situation produces in all of us and prevent us from taking a collective stance for peace and justice. We need to develop a profound understanding of "How institutions think," and how we can overcome the limits they are dramatically displaying. It is of utmost importance that we now break the silence by advocating for \*(1)\* an immediate ceasefire in Palestine and access to essential goods and relief for all the survivors of this war; (2) protection of all civil rights for the Palestinian people everywhere; (3) respect for the international treaties intended to avoid that the world falls again in the bloodbaths of our history, especially UN resolutions 3237, 37/123/A, and the Geneva convention in forcibly displaced people.

We believe that EASA could release such a statement which would respond to our professional and ethical duties towards the present situation.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Stefano Boni, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia  
Nadia Breda, Università di Firenze  
Maddalena Gretel Cammelli, Università di Torino  
Duccio Canestrini, Università di Siena  
Serena Caroselli, Università degli Studi di Milano  
Francesca Cerbini, CRIA/Universidade do Minho  
Stefania Consigliere, Università di Genova  
Giovanni Cordova, Università di Napoli Federico II  
Osvaldo Costantini, Sapienza-Università di Roma  
Manuela Ivone Cunha, CRIA/Universidade do Minho  
Anna Giulia Della Puppa, PhD candidate-Sapienza Università di Roma  
Irene Falconieri, Università di Catania  
Francesco Fanoli, Independent Researcher  
Stefano Portelli, University of Leicester/Institut Català d'Antropologia  
Chiara Quagliarello, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris  
Valeria Ribeiro Corossacz, Università Roma Tre  
Luca Rimoldi, Università di Milano-Bicocca  
Tommaso Sbriccoli, UCL-University of London  
Raffaele Spadano, Università di Chieti e Pescara  
Mauro Van Aken, Università di Milano-Bicocca  
Cecilia Vergnano, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
Carolina Vesce, Università di Macerata  
Cristina Zavaroni, Università di Torino

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**Then after the statement was posted:**

Dear Ana Ivasiuc,

As you know, some of the undersigned anthropology researchers had already written a letter from Italy, asking EASA to take a public stance against Israeli war and ethnic cleansing in Gaza. No need to tell you how relieved and grateful we were, when we heard that EASA had been already elaborating a statement in support to Palestine. This is why we now feel compelled to express our deepest support for the EASA Executive Statement on the Situation in Gaza published on October 23rd, in accordance with the inalienable need to speak out and take a public position when facing events of such gravity.

The recent events are involving us in many regards:

- 1) In the first place, as citizens concerned with the state of Israel that despite being a UN member has been breaching an unprecedented number of treaties and resolutions (including murder over 100 UN employees) showing complete disrespect for the international community and the norms adopted to avoid the world ever again falling in overarching violence and barbarity.
- 2) Secondly, as residents in Europe, a continent that historically has direct responsibilities in the colonization of Palestine, and whose academic community has been facing a long-term struggle to overcome the heavy burden of a colonial past that imposed an unspeakable toll of suffering and dispossession to countless people and communities all over the world. The current facts and recent history are now compelling us to speak out against Israel's colonialism. As Shahram Khosravi wrote: "Worse than colonial silence is decolonial silence".
- 3) Finally, as anthropologists, practitioners of a discipline whose mandate is rooted in the study of past and present forms of symbolic and structural violence, well aware that the cultural

dehumanization of the enemy produces barbarism and attempts to silence any endeavor to denounce it.

By insisting that “anthropology matters”, we are claiming a public role in the collective production of a consciousness for a future where atrocities are not repeated. We feel compelled to take a stance in front of a crisis stemmed from and developed through decades of injustice, illegal occupations, severe forms of discrimination, arbitrary arrests, and spatial segregation. As Italian anthropologists, moreover, we reclaim the inheritance of one of the founding fathers of our discipline, Ernesto De Martino, who following Antonio Gramsci, asserted the need for intellectuals to take sides.

Several associations of scholars, including the American Anthropological Association, have spoken out against what is happening in the Gaza Strip. Beyond differences in interpretation, most of these calls to solidarity share the request for an immediate ceasefire and express their concern towards the attempt to silence the academic communities worldwide. Following these initiatives, we believe it is our ethical and professional duty to contain this dangerous ideological drift, by otherwise standing up and advocating for peace and justice for the Palestinian people, in support to the thousands of Jews all over the world demonstrating their dissent against the right-wing, fundamentalist, and racist government of Benjamin Netanyahu, and against the colonial and warmongering policies of the state of Israel.

We strongly hold hopes that these calls for peace and justice create a space where all the scholarly community can agree on the basic respect of international law, human rights, dignity and self-determination of all people and communities worldwide. Moreover, we hail and support any initiative set to this direction, and we incite all the associations and institutions we are part of, to do the same, thus to audibly express their support to EASA’s Executive Statement.

Yours sincerely,

ANPIA – Associazione Nazionale Professionale Italiana di  
Antropologia SIAA- Società Italiana di Antropologia Applicata’s  
Executive Committee SIAC- Società Italiana di Antropologia Culturale  
Silvia Antinori, Independent Researcher  
Roberto Beneduce, Università di Torino  
Stefano Boni, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia  
Caterina Borrelli, Università Ca’ Foscari  
Nadia Breda, Università di Firenze  
Veronica Buffon, Istituto Dermatologico San Gallicano - IRCCS, Roma  
Maddalena Gretel Cammelli, Università di Torino  
Duccio Canestrini, Campus universitario di Lucca  
Serena Caroselli, Università degli Studi di Milano  
Francesca Cerbini, CRIA-Universidade do Minho  
Stefania Consigliere, Università di Genova  
Giovanni Cordova, Università di Napoli Federico II  
Osvaldo Costantini, Sapienza-Università di Roma  
Fulvia D’Aloisio, Università della Campania  
Anna Giulia Della Puppa, PhD candidate-Sapienza Università di Roma  
Irene Falconieri, Università di Catania  
Francesco Fanoli, Independent Researcher  
Alessandra Gribaldo, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia  
Viviana Luz Toro Matuk, Università della Valle D’Aosta,  
Giacomo Mantovan, CRIA- ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa  
Selenia Marabello, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia  
Mimmo Perrotta, Università di Bergamo  
Barbara Pinelli, Università Roma-Tre  
Stefano Portelli, Observatori d’Antropologia del Conflictu Urbà (OACU), Universitat de Barcelona  
Antonio Maria Pusceddu, CRIA- ISCTE-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa  
Chiara Quagliarello, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris  
Valeria Ribeiro Corossacz, Università Roma Tre  
Giuliana Sanò, Università di Messina

Luca Rimoldi, Università di Milano-Bicocca  
Ruba Salih, Università di Bologna  
Tommaso Sbriccoli, UCL-University of London  
Raffaele Spadano, Università di Chieti e Pescara  
Simona Taliani, Università di Torino  
Federica Tarabusi, Università di Bologna

Sabrina Tosi Cambini, Università di Parma  
Mauro Van Aken, Università di Milano-Bicocca  
Cecilia Vergnano, Katholieke Universiteit  
Leuven Carolina Vesce, Università di Macerata  
Francesco Zanutelli, Università di Messina  
Cristina Zavaroni, Università di Torino

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Dear Dr. Ivasiuc and dear EASA executive committee,

I am a member of the EASA since its early days of foundation. After having read your statement on the EASA website about the situation in Gaza I cannot remain silent about it because I am deeply concerned about the democratic stance of the committee.

First, how can a committee which was selected by its members publish this statement without according this highly critical topic of multilateral violence with the members of EASA!?

Second, how can this committee of anthropologists publish a statement full of multiple concealment!? How can anthropologists conceal long-lasting heavy anti-democratic, oppressive and antisemitic acting on the side of Hamas and its advocates (violence against, repression and misuse of Palestinian people, massacre of Jewish and non-Jewish people by Hamas, aiming at erasing the state of Israel by Hamas and its advocates)!

As an anthropologist and political person I find this statement extremely biased. Intellectually, politically and morally it falls too short.

As a member of EASA I do not want to be associated with this public statement and urgently ask the committee to rewrite the statement by including those voices of members who do not agree to this statement (having talked to several members I am sure that there are many more who disagree with the committee's procedure and the contents as they were published).

I also wish to add that I will be ready to cancel my membership if the committee would insist on its anti-democratic procedure and the anti-democratic contents of this statement.

Best regards from Vienna  
Herta Nöbauer

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Vienna, 27 October 2023

Dear EASA Executive Committee,

Your "EASA Executive Statement on the situation in Gaza" irritated me deeply, and made me angry. Starting with your title and the picture you are using, this is a political statement which I do not share as such. It moreover insinuates comparisons, which are not only legally and morally problematic, but the more so regarding comparison as scholarly method in anthropology.

I understood and understand EASA as a professional scholarly organisation — not as a political party, not as an NGO with a political agenda. From its legal status, the Association has neither legislative nor executive power, and both its Mission Statement and its Constitution do not include

any exclusivist ideological stance. I always appreciated that my membership would not imply being committed to any (dictated) political ideology — on the contrary, I insist on my personal political opinions which I may share with whom I want to, where and whenever I want.

Before issuing the statement on Gaza you should have asked the members whether they would agree or not. Therefore, with your statement, you have abused my membership.

Regards,  
Thomas Fillitz  
(EASA Secretary 2007-2013)

PS: As I consider the question of political statements issued by the Association's Executive Committee an important issue for membership, please consider publishing my letter on the Association's website.

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Krakow, 02.11.2023

Dear Colleagues

I have just read the 'EASA Executive Statement on the situation in Gaza' and I am outraged. Not a word about Hamas! Not a word of sympathy and understanding for the Israelis who are being attacked, killed, kidnapped! A black and white world as in a fairy tale. I am not defending the Israeli government because it is disastrous, I am not defending the Israeli settlers because I think they are a serious source of problems, but for God's sake, how can one be so insensitive while hiding behind sensitivity!

EASA only calls on Israel to respect international law, including human rights. Agreed, but why should Israel be the only one to respect them, especially since, according to Amnesty International, these rights have not been respected in the West Bank or Gaza for a long time? The statement also refers, one-sidedly and contrary to the facts, to the wave of anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian repressions and violent acts. On the contrary, we are witnessing the opposite, including the very violent protests that are sweeping Europe and statements like this one from the EASA. And what about the wave of openly anti-Semitic, as in no longer just anti-Israeli sentiments and actions? Should the EASA turn a blind eye to this?

I do not understand the justification for Hamas - they are not attacking only military targets in Israel, they are attacking civilian targets, people. They use their own people as human shields behind which they hide and from which they attack. They disgustingly exploit the support given to the Palestinians, pretending to represent them when they themselves are a tool of the disgusting regime in Iran. They are the greatest enemy of Palestine, but also of the values of those who today ally themselves with Hamas in protests in the name of supposedly defending Palestine. It is Hamas that should be condemned today as the worst enemy of Palestine and Palestinians.

This is another example of the fact that the authorities of anthropological institutions are making less and less use of the anthropological perspective in describing and understanding the phenomena to which they refer.

Sincerely,

Marcin Brocki, prof. JU  
Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology  
Jagiellonian University  
Krakow, Poland

Aleksandar Boskovic, prof.  
Institute of Archaeology,  
Belgrade;  
former Program Director for Transitional Justice, HLC, Belgrade

Note from Petr Skalník, Independent Researcher, member of EASA 1990-2022:

I am supporting the protest letter written by Marcin Brocki. Although I am no longer a member of EASA I feel that my voice should be known as I have many friends and colleagues who still are members.

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To the executive committee of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA),

As a member of EASA and an Israeli academic, I am deeply disappointed, appalled, and offended by your recent statement on the “situation in Gaza”. The unbalanced statement expresses neither sympathy nor care for the victims of the October 7 massacre that was orchestrated by the Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas, which has governed Gaza since 2007 (following the withdrawal of Israel and its military from Gaza in 2005). The very minimal gesture you make in extending “solidarity to those mourning the loss of their loved ones in both Palestine and Israel” is followed by six paragraphs that blame Israel for the situation while uncritically perpetuating Hamas propaganda and Hamas apologists’ narratives. What is worse, you completely ignore the immediate and direct cause of the war, show disregard for Israeli concerns, and do not even bother to mention the hundreds of Israelis and non-Israelis missing and held hostage in Gaza.

Before I address the highly problematic content of the statement in detail, I wish to point out what is, quite tellingly, absent from it: an unequivocal condemnation of the atrocities and crimes against humanity committed by Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and some Gazan civilians on October 7 and subsequently. That includes the clearly *intentional and indiscriminate* murder, torture, mutilation, beheading, rape, and kidnapping of thousands of Israelis and non-Israelis – Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Atheists; men, women, children, and babies; persons with disabilities and elderly people, including holocaust survivors. Thousands of Israelis in the north and south have been internally displaced and the Israeli communities around Gaza have been destroyed. It is noteworthy that these communities are well known for having a large proportion of people with a liberal and dovish political stance on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and that, among those who were murdered and taken hostage, are peace and human rights activists.

The mind struggles to comprehend the horror, brutality, and monstrosity of what had happened, but let it be clear: parents were tied down and forced to watch as their children were tortured and burned alive; children had to watch their parents being murdered in front of them; women and children were taken hostage at gunpoint and paraded through the streets of Gaza; medical facilities and staff were purposely targeted to prevent medical care that could save lives. Even farm animals and pets were not spared in this orgy of death and bloodshed. This is just a partial list of the horrors, which join the “regular” indiscriminate and intentional use of rockets against Israeli civilians. These rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, which had sadly been normalized, have for many years inflicted endless pain, suffering, and trauma upon Israeli civilians – including myself.

Those who committed the atrocities filmed themselves in the act, posted images and videos on social media, and even called their family from victims’ cellphones to proudly tell them how many Israeli civilians they murdered. As social anthropologists, what do you make of a society, culture, or group of people where individuals who commit such horrendous crimes feel no need to hide or be ashamed of their actions, and even take pride in and celebrate them? More importantly, though, what should be made of your own silence for more than two weeks after the massacre occurred? What does this damning silence say about the actual values of EASA and how its executive committee feels about the Israeli members of the association? Why is it that all the executive committee could come up with eventually was this shamefully one-sided, cliché-fraught, ethically despicable, and outrageously inaccurate statement that effectively serves to justify the atrocities committed on October 7? Why

does it not contain even one full sentence that expresses sympathy for Israelis or recognizes that Israelis have human rights?

You condemn violence, but only when it concerns the civilians of Gaza and while completely ignoring the longstanding and well-documented use of Gaza's population by Hamas as human shields in their ongoing genocidal campaign against Israel and Jews in general. In that, EASA's executive committee not only turns a blind eye to the violence and cruelty of Hamas and other terrorist groups towards Israelis *and* Palestinians, but also overlooks the continuous cynical weaponization of human rights and humanitarianism by such groups for their nefarious aims.

Another significant concern I have is what appears to be the complicity of EASA in the exploitation of academia and academic knowledge in informational, economic, and epistemic warfare against Israel. You make very serious and harsh accusations regarding supposed "*indiscriminate*" Israeli air strikes on Gaza and Israeli intent to "*starve*" Gaza's population, but do not have any meaningful evidence to support such controversial claims. It seems that you are uncritically adopting and replicating exaggerated and too often misguided and superficial narratives about a highly complex and nuanced reality while presenting your internalization or naïve acceptance of such narratives and their application to the current situation as authoritative truths told by anthropologists who are experts on matters of "state violence, human rights, peace, conflict, and security". All this while none of the members of the executive committee are experts on Israel and most have little, if any, experience living in the area or ability to speak the local languages. Instead of trying to understand the current situation by consulting or asking the opinion of your Israeli colleagues, who have certainly not been shy of criticizing Israeli government policies over the years, you aligned yourselves with Birzeit University, heeding to the manipulative and disingenuous letter sent out by this institution that has been a fertile breeding ground for radicalization and incitement to violence, antisemitism, and recruitment of young Palestinians into Hamas.

Perhaps the most absurd part of the statement is the warning "against decontextualised narratives of conflict and 'terrorism'" and your decrying of "genocidal framing of Palestinians as culprits ... deserving of collective punishment", which has allegedly "incited murderous hatred against Muslims and Arabs in other parts of the world". What should in fact be a much bigger cause of concern right now is the widespread selective and manipulative use of "context" in academia and beyond to justify the horrific and vicious attacks on Israeli civilians. What context is there to justify the actions of armed men who proudly broadcast to the world how they hold an entire family hostage after shooting their 18-year-old daughter? For the rape of young women, both alive and dead? For murdering children as they try to hide under tables and beds?

If the members of the executive committee insist on putting this cruelty into context, I would strongly suggest that they educate themselves on the long history of blood-litels and pogroms against Jews in Europe; of discrimination and abuse of Jews under Arab and Muslim rule; on the Farhud, the 1934 Thrace pogroms, and other riots targeting Jewish communities in Arab and Muslim countries; on the expulsion of Jews from those countries during the 20<sup>th</sup> century; on the massacre of Jews in Palestine during the 1929 riots in places like Hebron and Jerusalem, and the displacement and elimination of entire Jewish communities (some very ancient) in Palestine before and during the 1948 war. I would also suggest they inform themselves about Hamas, its fundamentalist religious ideology, and the cruel practices it has used to consolidate and maintain its tyrannical rule over the people of Gaza.

Indeed, that context is particularly important for understanding why it is problematic when respectable media outlets and intellectuals take at face value claims made by an extremist, antisemitic, and dictatorial organization, irresponsibly spreading mis- and disinformation and therefore helping this organization to incite violence. It is also critical for understanding why, at this time, there should be no legitimacy for self-righteous and often antisemitic anti-Israeli mobs to march freely on campus grounds and city centers around the world while chanting genocidal and murderous slogans, all while Jews and Israelis too often need to hide their identity and stay behind locked doors. Have you not heard about Jewish schools being forced to close down as their safety cannot be guaranteed? Are you

deaf to the cries of Jewish schoolchildren being harassed and attacked on the streets of Britain? Have you denounced the vandalism and marking of Jewish homes and businesses in Europe? Are you blind to the surge in antisemitic incidents across North America or to the numerous attempted attacks and threats directed at Israeli embassies? Are you not concerned by the genocidal threats repeatedly made by the Iranian regime and the attacks of its proxies on the Northern border of Israel? Do you really not understand that what is potentially at stake since October 7 is the future of Israel and the life of its people? Or maybe you do understand, and rejoice?

I urge you to retract your statement and apologize. Until then, I see no other option but to cancel my membership in EASA and to call on others to do the same. Meanwhile, hoping that you rethink your stance, I will end this letter with words written in the aftermath of the 1903 Kishinev pogrom, reminiscent of the massacre of October 7, 2023 in too many ways.

On the Slaughter/ H.N. Bialik

Heaven, beg mercy for me! If there is  
a God in you, a pathway through  
you to this God - which I have not  
discovered - then pray for me! For my  
heart is dead, no longer is there prayer  
on my lips; all strength is gone, and  
hope is no more. Until when, how  
much longer, until when?

You, executioner! Here's my neck - go  
to it, slaughter me! Behead me like a  
dog, yours is the almighty arm and the  
axe, and the whole earth is my  
scaffold  
- and we, we are the few! My blood is  
fair game - strike the skull, and  
murder's blood, the blood of nurslings  
and old men, will spurt onto your  
clothes and will never, never be wiped  
off.

And if there is justice - let it show  
itself at once! But if justice show  
itself after I have been blotted out  
from beneath the skies - let its throne  
be hurled down forever! Let heaven  
rot  
with eternal evil! And you, the  
arrogant, go in this violence of yours,  
live by your bloodshed and be cleansed  
by it.

And cursed be the man who says:  
Avenge! No such revenge - revenge for  
the blood of a little child - has yet been  
devised by Satan. Let the blood pierce  
through the abyss! Let the blood seep  
down into the depths of darkness, and  
eat away there, in the dark, and breach  
all the rotting foundations of the earth.

Michael Rabi-Syrkin, Postdoctoral Fellow  
Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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Dear Ana,

Hope you are ok. I'm writing to you concerning the EASA statement on the situation in Gaza. I write as an Israeli Jew who is a peace activist and a left winger.

While I'm beside myself watching with horror the Israeli devastation of the Gaza Strip, and as a long-time staunch opponent of Israel's inhumane punitive policies in Gaza, I must tell you frankly that it pains and angers me that EASA is entirely silent on the atrocities perpetrated by Hamas against Israeli civilians on October 7.

I'm not calling for a "balanced" statement since this is clearly a grossly imbalanced situation. Nevertheless, the utter inability of the intellectual left, including within anthropology, to acknowledge the horrors that were perpetrated on my people leaves me dumbfounded.

On Saturday, October 7, thousands of Hamas fighters overtook communities in the south of Israel. They cold bloodedly murdered whole families, including small children and old people. They set fire to homes killing the people inside. Some of these communities were burned to the ground. They attacked an open-air party and murdered hundreds. There are numerous testimonies also of rape and decapitation. And they kidnapped civilians.

Indeed, I'm beside myself with Israel's Pavlovian retaliation and feel helpless and enraged by it. But as far as the global left is concerned, I want to remind you that Israel is not completely one with the Israeli government, just like Palestine and Palestinians are not all Hamas. The Israeli left, in particular, is in need of support, for at the height of the war, our own voices against the war, against internal incitement, and for a peaceful resolution receive very aggressive, in fact violent reactions inside Israel.

One small example, the second day of the war my university's administration suspended a few Arab students for allegedly expressing support of Hamas. I was part of a small group of professors who got involved trying to stop this, and to alert the rector's attention to the implications of such punitive actions for the Arab student population at large, who are now at risk of undifferentiated attacks. The reactions were scary. Not only did the administration turn against us and blamed us, too, for being Hamas supporters and heartless self-hating Jews. They leaked the correspondence and we were attacked on social media. A petition calling for our immediate dismissal got thousands of signatures. We received threatening phone calls, and social media got littered with calls to slaughter us and our families. This, by the way, is merely a footnote, for the people who are at real danger - the Arab students and citizens - have remained defenseless.

I appeal to you, as a colleague and a peace activist, to voice a more rounded statement.  
Best, Amalia

Professor Amalia Sa'ar  
U of Haifa,  
Anthropology

new online: "Economic citizenship at the intersection of nation, class and gender: The case of Palestinian women in Israel" Current Anthropology 2023.

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25<sup>th</sup> October 2023

To: **EASA - European Association of Social Anthropologists**

Prof. **Ana Ivasiuc** – President

**RE: EASA Executive Statement on the Situation in Gaza**

We, members of ['BaShaar – Academic Community for Israeli Society'](#)\*, have just read your [“Statement on the situation in Gaza”](#).

We are appalled and saddened by your **totally biased and distorted “Statement on the situation in Gaza”**. We share the immense grief of innocent civilians and fully support the already ongoing efforts, with Israel's consent, to provide humanitarian aid and establish a safe zone. We hope that the humanitarian aid reaches only the innocent civilians and not Hamas – in this respect it is worth noting that Hamas has confiscated all the diesel fuel supplies from UNRA intended for hospitals in Gaza. We also share the hope for a just and peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

What we find contemptable is that you did not deem it necessary to even mention Hamas by name, nor to condemn in clear and explicit terms Hamas's horrible atrocities. 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. The first thing you should have done is to categorically deplore Hamas massacre! There is an abundance of verified evidence of the crimes against humanity performed by Hamas which you are surely aware of. Such inhuman brutal atrocities on innocent civilians should never be justified or overlooked – but you, scientists that are committed to the facts and the truth, chose to ignore.

What has happened on October 7th is not another clash in the Middle East between Israel and Hamas. Hamas terrorists butchered and slaughtered more than 1400 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, fetuses cut out brutally of their pregnant mothers, women raped and then murdered, families burned and corpses then triumphantly displayed to cheering ecstatic crowds – all in the inhuman ISIS tradition. 250 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. **These unspeakable acts of terror by Hamas are PURE EVIL that a moral society cannot and should not ignore or justify under no circumstances.**

What Hamas has done is in line with the atrocities committed by ISIS, not to mention the crimes against humanity committed by the Nazis against the Jews during the Holocaust. **Therefore, we find the absence of any mention of Hamas, any explicit condemnation of Hamas atrocities, as well as the one-sided bias in your statement MORALLY WRONG.**

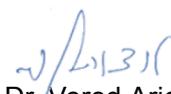
There is a profound and moral difference between Israel's efforts to avoid harming innocent civilians, and Hamas's deliberate strategy of intentionally targeting and inflicting terrible suffering upon as many civilians as possible in Israel as well as in Gaza. We support a peaceful and just solution 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. You failed to do it.**

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

Copy – EASA Executive Committee Members: Prof. Alexandra Oancă, Prof. Hege Høyer Leivestad, Prof. Roger Sansi Roca, Prof. Dominic Bryan, Prof. Hayal Akarsu, Prof. Monica Heintz, Prof. David Mills

\***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/>



האגודה האנתרופולוגית הישראלית  
ISRAELI ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION  
الجمعية الإسرائيلية لعلم الإنسان والحضارة

31.10.2023

Response of the President of the Israeli Anthropological Association to the EASA Executive Statement on the situation in Gaza

My friends and colleagues at The Israeli Anthropological Association, like the State of Israel as a whole, profoundly grieve the slaughter perpetrated against entire communities in the Western Negev by terrorists. We are all stricken with sorrow and speechless in the face of the outrageous aggression and mass murder deliberately visited upon innocents, including children and newborns, and the abhorrent acts of abuse. These are egregious crimes against humanity and against human morality. We stand with the families of the abductees and, along with countless others, hope for their speedy return.

As local professional anthropologists, we study and comprehend the Israel-Palestinian conflict in depth. We are intimately familiar with its injurious consequences for both Israeli society and Palestinian society, and because of this, we understand the importance of the thorough, contextualized analysis that is fundamental to the anthropological perspective. For this reason, I was astonished to read the European Association of Social Anthropologists' statement entitled "[EASA Executive Statement on the situation in Gaza](#)." This statement is a simplistic, one-sided, distorted text, filled with clichés and slogans, that disgraces not only its authors but the discipline as a whole.

The massacre that occurred in Israel on October 7 and that sparked the present round of bloodshed is not once mentioned in the statement, nor is the bloodthirsty regime of the fundamentalist terrorist organization Hamas, nor the horrific repression Hamas has perpetrated in Gaza and elsewhere. Nor is mention made of the over two hundred abductees of Israeli and other nationalities, men, women, the elderly, children, and babies, who are currently in the hands of Hamas. We are shocked by this fatuous attempt to place the events of October 7 into some kind of scholarly context, one that seeks to "understand" the murderers – and this while entire homes are still drenched in the blood of the

victims. The EASA document represents a moral and professional breakdown that will reverberate for years to come.

In the wake of this contemptible "statement," I would like to address a number of questions to EASA's Executive Committee: Has no rumor of the pogroms and atrocities committed on October 7 in Israel reached you? Are those atrocities commendable acts? Can they be described as legitimate acts of popular resistance? Is Israel entitled to protect its citizens? Why was the name of the terrorist organization Hamas omitted from a letter purporting to discuss the situation in Gaza from an "anthropological" perspective? Does the EASA's Executive Committee know who rules Gaza? Do they know how Hamas reached its position of power in Gaza and how it maintains it? Are the members of the EASA Executive Committee well acquainted with Hamas' views on the Israeli- Palestinian conflict and its explicit rejection of any peaceful solution with Jews? Do they know what the views of Hamas are regarding basic liberal and humane values? Do they know how Hamas treats its subjects who oppose it?

The position of the European Association of Social Anthropologists is a moral travesty in all respects. Acknowledging the massacre does not legitimize the killing of uninvolved civilians in Gaza. However, not condemning or even acknowledging the massacre legitimizes Hamas' crime against humanity.

As a religious Jew, now, as always, I pray for peace and mourn the death of innocents.

Prof. Nissim Leon, President

Israeli Anthropological Association



We, the undersigned members of former Executive Committees take the occasion of the recent statement of the Executive Committee “on the situation in Gaza” to express our unease, and to question the adequacy of the practice to issue political statements in the name of the EASA membership.

We are convinced that EASA’s huge success in the past is due to its focus on connecting members beyond borders and institutions. By doing so EASA is promoting interconnected research, dissemination, and teaching, and their scholarly debates, whereby its pillars are the ever growing magnitude of research topics, and a plurality of methods, theories and concepts.

Political statements, however, are largely one-sided, exclusivist statements, and we are worried that they would not represent sufficiently the overall diversity of the membership’s convictions. As a matter of fact, neither the Association’s Legal Status, nor its Mission Statement, nor its Constitution highlight any politico-ideological stance that the Association as such would stand for.

Furthermore, our unease also concerns two other problems with the issue of political statements by the Executive Committee. First, to be democratically legitimate, it would require prior consultation of membership, both about the issue that should be expressed, and about the statement’s specific political content. Second, any Executive Committee would face the need to explain why a particular political statement is being issued at the same time that many other worldwide forms of violence against individuals, groups, societies, or species are not considered worthy of attention.

Finally, the issuing of political statements without prior consultation subsumes any member under this specific assertion. In contrast, an abstention from such a practice would support the credibility of members who wish to express their own respective political attitudes and opinions: it would be their freedom and responsibility, their choice how to engage publicly, and which target groups they would consciously select.

The undersigned members of former EASA Executive Committees therefore request:

- to have this Open Letter published on the Association’s Website;
- to place this issue on the agenda of the forthcoming Members’ Forum at the

EASA conference in Barcelona.

Undersigned (in alphabetical order):

Michal Buchowski, Hana Cervinkova, Dorle Dracklé, Thomas Hylland Eriksen, Thomas Fillitz, Ulf Hannerz, Grazyna Kubica-Heller, Adam Kuper, Mark Maguire, Helena Wulff.

# Snapshot of responses on social media

♥ fiona Murphy liked



**Columba Gonzalez-Duarte**  
@columbagd

We need more statements as this. Well done [@EASAINFO](#)

 **EASA** @EASAINFO · Oct 24  
EASA statement on the situation on Gaza [easaonline.org/outputs/suppor...](https://easaonline.org/outputs/suppor...)

6:59 PM · Oct 24, 2023 · 65 Views



**Prof. Hanna Kienzler** ♥  
@HannaKienzler

...

📢 Statement by European Association of Social Anthropologists  
[@EASAINFO](#) in solidarity with Palestine  
▶ A clear condemnation of [#Israel's #WarCrimes](#) against civilians in  
[#Gaza](#) and the support given by the EU and European countries in this.  
🙏



**fiona Murphy**  
@fionae

...

Thank you [@EASAINFO](#) for this important and much needed statement of solidarity. [#anthrotwitter](#)

**Ken MacLeish** @ktmacleish · 15h

..

"We heed the call of our colleagues from Birzeit University to speak up against genocidal violence, occupation, and the flagrant violation of human rights in Gaza and the Palestinian Occupied Territories"

The1resa O'Keefe @Theresa\_OKeefe • 22h

Strong statement from om European anthropology colleagues. Eموpean sociologists need to follow suit. "We heed the call of our colleagues from Birzeit University to speak up against genocidal violence. occupation, and the flagrant violation of human rights• .

@ EASA @EASAinfo • Oct 24



**FelixSchiedlowski**  
@fschiedLowski

Ich bin Mitglied der European Association of Social Anthropologists. Deren Statement zu Israel/Palastina empfinde ich als zutiefst falsd1. Keil1 Wort zum Terror der Hamas, kein Wart zum Antisemitismus. Schauerlich..

Translated from German by Google

I am a member of the Europea11Associatio11of Social Anthropologists. I find their stateme11t 011 Israel/Palesti11e to be deeply wro11g. Not a word about Hamas terror. not a word about a11ti-Semitism. Horrible.

(@ EASA@EASAinfo · Oct24

EASA statement on the situation on Gaza easaonline.org/outputs/suppor...

11:10 PM · Oct 24, .2023 • 1102 Views

Rodrigo C.. IBulamalh@rodrigobulamah • 14h

As anthropologis s with expertise on state violence, human rights, peace. conflict and security, we warn against dlecontextualised narratives of conflict and •terrorism•. The genocidal framing of Palestinians as culprits, as human animals', and as deserving of collective+

@ EASA @EASAinfo • Oct 24

EASA statement on the si uation on Gaza easaonline.org/outputs/suppor...

**Alexandrn Oa111ca, PhD** @AlexandraOanca • 2311

The exec of the European Association of Social Anthropologists extends its solidarity to hose mouming the loss of heir loved ones in both Palestine & Israel.

We strongly condemn the violence perpetrated by the Israeli state against the civilians of Gaza.

Full statement below:

EASA @EASAinfo - Oct 24

**Jo1111a:tha1A1111derman** @AldermanJD • Oct 24

This statement by the executive committee of the European Association of Social Anthropologists on the Israeli state's violence against civilians in Gaza is welcome, strikes the right tone, and I fully agree with it.

**stefa1110 p,orte1111** :: @stafe76 • Oct 23

Anthropologists of [@EASainfo](#) call for "an immediate ceasefire and humanitarian relief for the people of Gaza, and a commitment from Israel and all governments to a peace process that deals with the historic inequalities, injustice and structural violence in the region".

