



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

