

A Statement by sociologists and anthropologists

[signed by 200 among whom 5 were past-presidents of the Israeli Sociological Society and 11 were past presidents of the Israeli Anthropological Association]

The reports and images that are coming out of Gaza are heartbreaking. Masses of refugees, some having to flee for the second and third times in the past two years, sacrificing their lives to obtain a bit of food or a drop of water for their starving families. The Israeli army continues to kill and injure on a daily basis dozens and even hundreds of exhausted people, who have survived the horrors of the war so far. All systems of life - health, education, the economy - have collapsed. Babies, children and adults are starving. With a media, which is mobilized to maintain national morale, the majority of Israeli citizens are not exposed to the extent of the horrific atrocities in Gaza.

Although the Israeli government openly declares its intention to expand the Israeli military presence in Gaza and forcibly transfer civilian population, and although most Israeli citizens oppose the continuation of the war and support a comprehensive hostage deal that would end it, criticism of Israel's actions in Gaza, especially when it comes from outside, is often dismissed as "anti-Semitic". The mechanisms of denial of what is being done in our name are working overtime.

The actions towards ethnic cleansing in the West Bank also continue and the violence against Palestinians is rising. Every day, armed settler militias terrorize the civilian population. They often do so with the backing of the army and police, which openly declare that they are not responsible for the protection and safety of Palestinian residents, even in areas where Israel has full control. Fearing the attacks, entire communities are fleeing their homes and leaving their land to be taken over by state-backed settlers.

We, Israeli sociologists and anthropologists, call for an immediate ceasefire, the ending of the starvation of the people of Gaza, and putting a stop to the ethnic cleansing. We call for the return of the hostages in an agreement that will end the war. We call for increasing the aid to the civilian population in Gaza, for restoring the supply of electricity and water and for the rehabilitation of hospitals and universities in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli society needs healing and rehabilitation: it needs support for families who have experienced loss and destruction and who need to rebuild their lives; the return of all evacuees to their homes and the rehabilitation of their livelihoods; support for all those who have been terrorized by the horrors of war; the expansion and improvement of health, education and the welfare systems and the restoration of personal security and secured lives in Arab communities. All of this requires the investment of enormous resources. However, instead of investing in construction, the current government is investing these resources in destruction: the complete destruction of the Gaza Strip, the destruction of the chance for a future of living together in peace and equality; and the

social and moral destruction of Israeli society the consequences of which would be felt for many more years to come.

The ongoing state of war also has led to a wave of incitement against students and faculty from the Palestinian-Arab society in Israel. Such conditions of ongoing incitement are unsustainable for the Israeli higher education system. We reiterate our previous call to put a stop to the racist attacks against Palestinian Arab students and faculty and demand proactive actions to prevent their recurrence in all spaces where Jews and Arabs study and work together.

Sociology and anthropology are humanistic disciplines. Many of us study the way societies deny the injustices committed in their names. Our commitment to basic moral standards, alongside our professional commitment to collecting empirical data, oblige us to repel the efforts to silence us at the international and local spheres and to protest against the crimes committed in our name, daily.

Therefore, we call for:

1. The immediate end of the war.
2. The return of all hostages.
3. Taking concrete steps to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
4. The rehabilitation Gaza.
5. Stopping the neglect, abandonment, and incitement against the Palestinian Arab society in Israel.

We stand with all people who aspire to a life of freedom, security, and dignity, and call on Israeli society to take moral responsibility and work for a shared and just future.