An Open Letter to Israeli Academics

written by Dan La Botz | July 13, 2014

These are desperately bad times. The government of Israel, having provoked the firing of rockets by its rampage through the West Bank, is now using that response as the pretext for an aerial assault on Gaza which has already cost scores of lives. An atmosphere of hysteria is being deliberately provoked in Israel, and whole communities are being subject to collective punishment, a war crime. People are dying, and for what? To prevent a unity government of Fatah and Hamas?

We have been asked by our academic colleagues in Gaza – whose universities have been destroyed a number of times in the last six years, who are unable to teach or study, and who are also in growing need of food and medicines, like the rest of the almost two million Palestinians living in Gaza – to urge you to act urgently, to make your voice heard in Israel and abroad against what the Israeli government is inflicting on the Gaza population. More than 123 people have been killed already in Gaza by the IDF since the start of the Israeli operation on Monday, and the number will be bigger by the time you read this message. Most of these people are children, women and the elderly. There could be no credible claim made that these people were involved in any military activity whatsoever. The Gaza infrastructure, already in tatters, is now further undermined, and the population is in the worst situation it has ever been, and this is getting worse by the minute. These atrocities, committed by Israel will bring neither peace nor security to the region, and can only lead to further deterioration of the already dangerous situation in Palestine/Israel.

We invite you, as fellow academics and intellectuals, to join your voices in an open and resounding protest about these war crimes by the Israeli government – your government. We urge you to stand up and be counted, to answer the call of your Gazan colleagues and make your voice heard. We hope that you will be able and willing to come together and voice your total opposition to the war crimes committed in your name!

If you are an Israeli academic and agree with us on the urgent need to bring an immediate end to those atrocities, and to act to end the illegal occupation in Palestine, please sign the **statement at the bottom of this letter** by sending us a mail with your name, title and affiliation. (See instructions below.)

Signatories

Dr. (Baroness) Jenny Tonge, House of Lords, UK
Prof. Richard Falk, Princeton, USA
Prof. Haim Bresheeth, SOAS, UK
Prof. Moshé Machover, KCL, UK
Prof. Yosefa Loshitzky, SOAS, UK
Prof. Hagit Borer, QMU, UK
Prof. Nira Yuval-Davis, UEL, UK
Prof. Jonathan Rosenhead, LSE, UK
Prof. Ronit Lentin, TCD, Ireland
Prof. Nur Masalha, UK
Prof. Yigal Arens, USA
Prof. Terri Ginzburg, USA
Prof. Hamid Dabashi, USA
Prof. Stephen Deutsch, BU, UK

Prof. Robert Lang, USA
Dr. Dina Matar, SOAS, UK
Prof. Florence Martin, USA
Prof. Michael Chanan, UK
Prof. Susan Hayward, , Exeter, UK
Prof. Des Freeman, Goldsmiths, UK
Prof. Barbara Harrell-Bond, Oxford, UK
Dr. Julian Vigo, UK
Prof. Karma Nabulsi, UK
Dr. Carlos Prieto del Campo, Spain
Prof. Noha Melor, Kingston, UK
Prof. Ghazi-Walid Falah, Akron, USA
Prof. David Palumbo-Liu, Stanford, USA
Prof. Bill V. Mullen, Perdue, USA
Prof. Sherna Berger-Gluck,
Prof. Rosalyn Baxandall, CUNY, USA
Prof. Emmanuel Farjoun, HUJ, Israel
Dr. Staughton Lynd, independent scholar, USA
Prof. Sondra Hale, UCLA, USA

If you are an academic and wish to sign the letter above, write directly *haimbresh@googlemail.com* with the subject heading: "PLEASE ADD MY SIGNATURE"

Do the same if you are an Israeli academic and wish to sign the letter below:

Statement to be signed by Israeli academics:

The signatories to this statement, all academics at Israeli universities, wish it to be known that they utterly deplore the aggressive military strategy being deployed by the Israeli government. The slaughter of large numbers of wholly innocent people, is placing yet more barriers of blood in the way of the negotiated agreement which is the only alternative to the occupation and endless oppression of the Palestinian people. Israel must agree to an immediate cease-fire, and start negotiating in good faith for the end of the occupation and settlements, through a just peace agreement.

If you are an Israeli academic, working in Israel, who would like to sign the statement above, please email haim@haimbresheeth with your name, title and affiliation.