



TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
The Lowy International School

The Lowy Quarterly

News & updates from TAU's global home. Thursday, January 25, 2024.



Message from the Vice President

Prof. Millette Shamir
TAU Vice President International

Dear friends and colleagues,

With the arrival of 2024, many around the world have welcomed new beginnings. At Tel Aviv University (TAU), we rang in the new year by officially starting our academic term. Of course, the start of the new term in no way diminishes the fact that today is Day 111. We are still mourning those taken from us too soon, both on October 7 and since then. And we are still advocating for the return of the more than 130 Israeli hostages who remain in Gaza; they are our parents, children, grandchildren, cousins and friends, and giving up on them is not an option.

Even as the ripples of October 7 continue to affect our daily lives, we know we need to find strength in what gives us meaning. For us in academia, so much of this comes from our research, our teaching, our learning and our community.

In this first month of TAU's academic term, while there have certainly been hard times, I also see a renewed sense of hope. I see labs once again brimming with researchers and ideas, local students reunited and running clubs, and faculty members bumping into one another in the hallways. While there are fewer international visitors, we are certainly still welcoming delegations, including one recently from the University of Pennsylvania (you can read about it below). We are also sending our own talented students on trips abroad, including to the recent Global Young Scientists Summit in Singapore.

Of course, we are not back to normal. Most notably, we still wait anxiously to welcome many of our students from the reserves. We are optimistic that we will see more and more of them in the coming weeks, and we have an academic plan, as well as financial and psychological support, to help these students to not only transition but thrive.

Together, we stand strong and keep our sights on a better future; this first month at TAU, if anything, has been a beautiful testament to this.

Yours,
Millette

News from the TAU Home Front

TAU's Academic Term Officially Begins



The academic term at Tel Aviv University (TAU) for students was supposed to begin on October 15, 2023, but was delayed due to October 7 and the war. After months of waiting, students share their experiences of being back on campus. [Read More...](#)

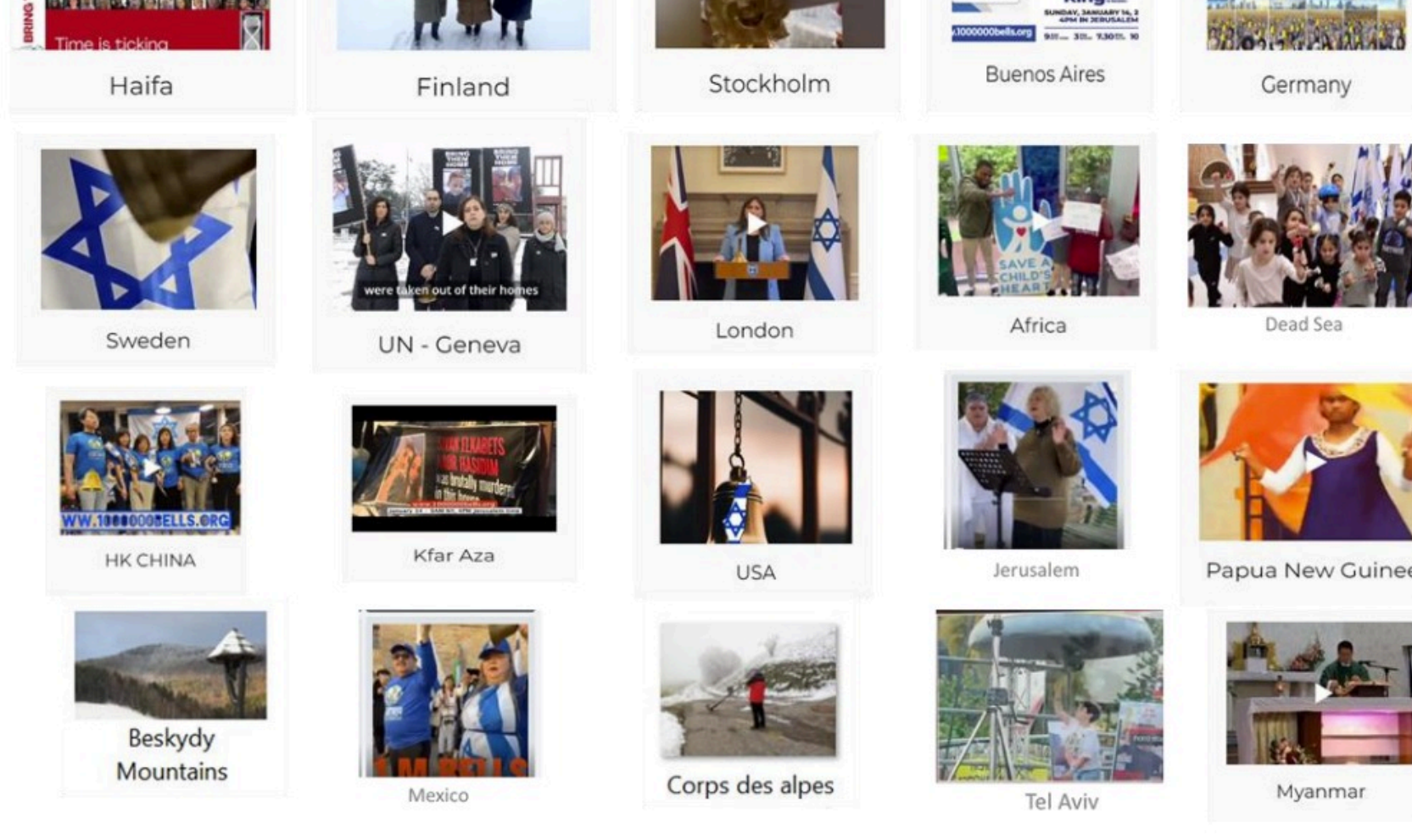
University of Pennsylvania Visits Tel Aviv University



Against a backdrop of concerns regarding rising antisemitism on American university campuses, a University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) delegation visited to show support, gain a better understanding of trauma in a post-October 7 context and build collaborations. [Read More...](#)

In Other News

- **At the ICJ** – On January 12, Israel presented their case before the International Court of Justice (ICJ); included on the legal team were [TAU alumni and former faculty](#). The Parosol Foundation International LLM, also recently invited international law expert and TAU alumna Natasha Hausdorff to [discuss the ICJ case](#).
- **Support from Bonn** – We are heartened by the Student Parliament of the University of Bonn for [expressing solidarity](#) with Israel, TAU and other Israeli universities.
- **A Gap Year Program for Future Leaders** – The Lowy International School is [excited to launch](#) the Exploration, Leadership and Innovation program, a gap year program for high achievers, focused on fostering the next generation of Jewish leaders.
- **ERC Proof of Concept Grants** – We are pleased to announce that [three Proof of Concept grants were awarded](#) respectively to Profs. Vered Padler-Karavani, Yuval Ebnstein and Yuval Nir.
- **Marking 100 Days** – Hundreds of people at TAU [rallied on January 14](#) to mark 100 days since October 7; The Lowy International School [also held events](#) and partnered in a global bell-ringing initiative to remember, from the hostages and ring in a world without hate [captured below are bell-ringing participants from around the world](#).



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What are your plans for the next academic year?

TAU is currently planning for the 2024-25 academic year as scheduled. This includes all academic programming, fellowships, calls for collaboration and more. We are fully committed to continuing the tradition of academic excellence at our University and have exciting new programs and projects that we will announce in due time.

How safe is it at Tel Aviv University right now?

Our top priority is the safety and wellbeing of our students and international community. We are vigilantly monitoring any changes in circumstances within the country and are in frequent contact with government agencies; our procedures and instructions are in alignment with wider governmental protocol and recommendations.

For those of you at TAU or who will be joining us, our focus is on taking care of you, keeping you safe and getting you the support you need. We are following the government safety recommendations for those in Tel Aviv, which currently involves ensuring proximity to a secure area. There are many safe and secure areas across TAU, including in the campus dorms. In the Einstein dorms, there is a secure area between building A and B; in the Broshim complex, there is a secure apartment (whose number starts with 01) on each floor of each building. A list of safe areas can be found [here](#).

What is day-to-day life like?

While we are limiting extracurricular activities and focusing on safety, we are also doing our best to support the wellbeing of our students on campus. For any students joining us, housing options in the dormitories remain unchanged, and students have 24/7 access to the Student Life Team to help with any questions or adjustments to day-to-day life. There are also mental health supports available.

We are currently organizing small gathering opportunities in accordance with current official guidelines and protocol. The term for international students began on October 22, 2023, and the academic term for all students began on December 31, 2023. We look forward to welcoming those students in the reserves in the coming weeks.

While Israel has experienced an unprecedented tragedy, we are also all very touched by the ways in which the TAU community has rallied together to support each other and Israel. Now is a time for care and kindness, and this sentiment is also very much felt on campus.

Are there currently restrictions on educational or extracurricular activities?

The term for international students began on October 22, 2023 and the term for all students at TAU began on December 31, 2023. In the coming weeks, we look forward to welcoming those students in the reserves and helping them to catch up on their studies.

Regarding extracurricular activities, all gatherings are following current governmental protocol (no more than 50 people gathered inside and 10 people outside) and are taking place in secure areas. In general, any excursions organized by The Lowy International School are cleared by the Israeli National Security Center and the Ministry of Education and coordinated with appropriate authorities (including Israeli police and army); we do not allow trips to any areas prohibited or deemed unsafe.

I need help with arranging travel/ordering food/getting mail or other day-to-day arrangements. Whom can I contact to help?

The Student Life Team is on call 24/7 and is here to assist regarding all day-to-day matters. The team can be contacted at 052-5346188.

What security measures are in place at the university?

The Lowy International School maintains frequent contact with government security agencies to stay informed of any potential escalations or risks on the horizon. In preparation for an emergency situation, all students receive safety training during orientation, a welcome kit with safety information, as well as regular communications. TAU maintains 24/7 security and staffing on campus and in the dormitories. For security reasons, anyone entering campus is required to show a student ID card or other form of ID and have their bags searched. Additionally, no one is permitted to enter a dormitory without a clearance chip (FOB).

Regarding the current circumstance in Israel, we are following the government safety instructions for those in Tel Aviv, which includes ensuring proximity to a secure area. There are many safe and secure areas across TAU, including in the campus dorms.

When an emergency situation arises, our priority is on contacting everyone promptly. The steps we take depend on the type of emergency; our school requires that all students carry a working mobile phone with an Israeli number, and we maintain student social-media groups such as a WhatsApp group. We also employ a buddy system.

Our [Safety, Health and Security](#) webpage provides greater details on approaches we would take should there be an emergency.

What do I do if I hear a siren?

What are part of the "Iron Dome" system in Israel, which alert and protect us at any given time.

When a siren is heard in Tel Aviv (where the University is located), you have approximately 1.5 minutes to make your way to a secure area. Once the siren stops, you should spend 10 additional minutes within the secure area. We also recommend that all members of our international community download the Home Front Command app, which will send push notifications in case a siren goes off around your location.

There are secure areas across TAU's campus and in the dorms. In the Einstein dorms, there is a secure area between building A and B; in the Broshim complex, there is a secure apartment (whose number starts with 01) on each floor of each building. A list of safe areas can be found [here](#).

I'm feeling anxious and scared. What should I do?

We want to emphasize that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. It takes courage to acknowledge when you are struggling and to ask for help. We are here to provide you with the resources you need to prioritize your mental health. If you are struggling, please contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188. They are on call 24/7. There is also a TAU mental health support line available 24/7. In the morning, you can contact psychological services at 03-6408505, or otherwise, at any time, leave a short WhatsApp message with your name and number at +972-50-2787037 and a psychotherapist will contact you.

In addition to seeking support, we encourage you to practice self-care, maintain a healthy lifestyle and connect with others. We recognize this may be a difficult time and we are here to help you.

I'd really appreciate meeting and being with other people right now. How can I do this?

We understand the need to be with people at this time, and the Student Life Team is organizing small gatherings in secure areas, in accordance with guidelines. Please reach out to the Student Life Team at 052-5346188. You are not alone.

What happens if things escalate in Israel?

Our top priority is the safety and wellbeing of our students and international community. We are vigilantly monitoring any changes to the circumstances in the country and are in frequent contact with government agencies. Should circumstances in Israel escalate and should there be a need for a change in protocol, we will communicate this to our international community. News updates regarding how the current situation in Israel is impacting The Lowy International School can be found on the [Important Updates in Light of the Security Situation](#) webpage.

While we will always reach out to our international students and researchers directly, subscribing to this newsletter is otherwise one of the best ways to receive any updates on changes in protocol for The Lowy International School.

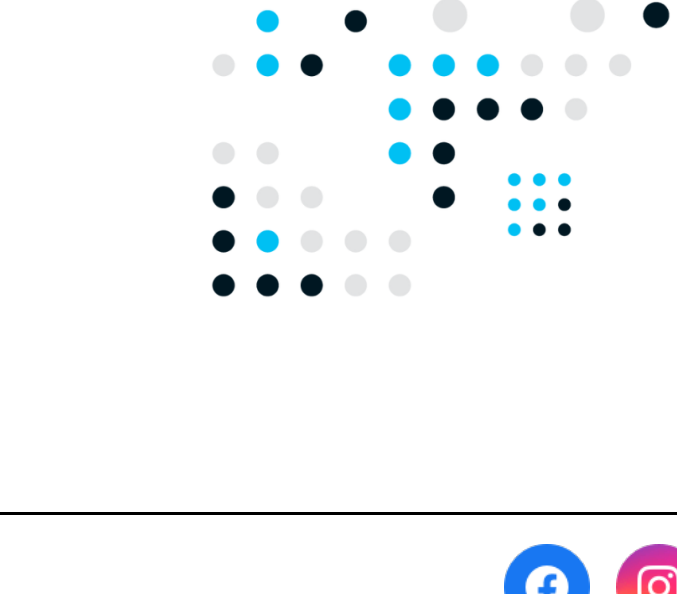
What should I do if I don't want to be at TAU?

We want to emphasize that we respect and support any decision made regarding your time with us at Tel Aviv University. Whether you decide to stay, return home temporarily or leave indefinitely, we will cooperate and assist with the necessary arrangements. We recommend contacting the Student Life Team for further assistance.

What should I do in case of an emergency?

In the case of an emergency, The Lowy International School will be in direct contact with international students about next steps.

Please visit our [Safety, Health and Security](#) webpage on the steps that should be taken should there be an emergency. Additionally, key emergency and mental health contacts can be found on this page.



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