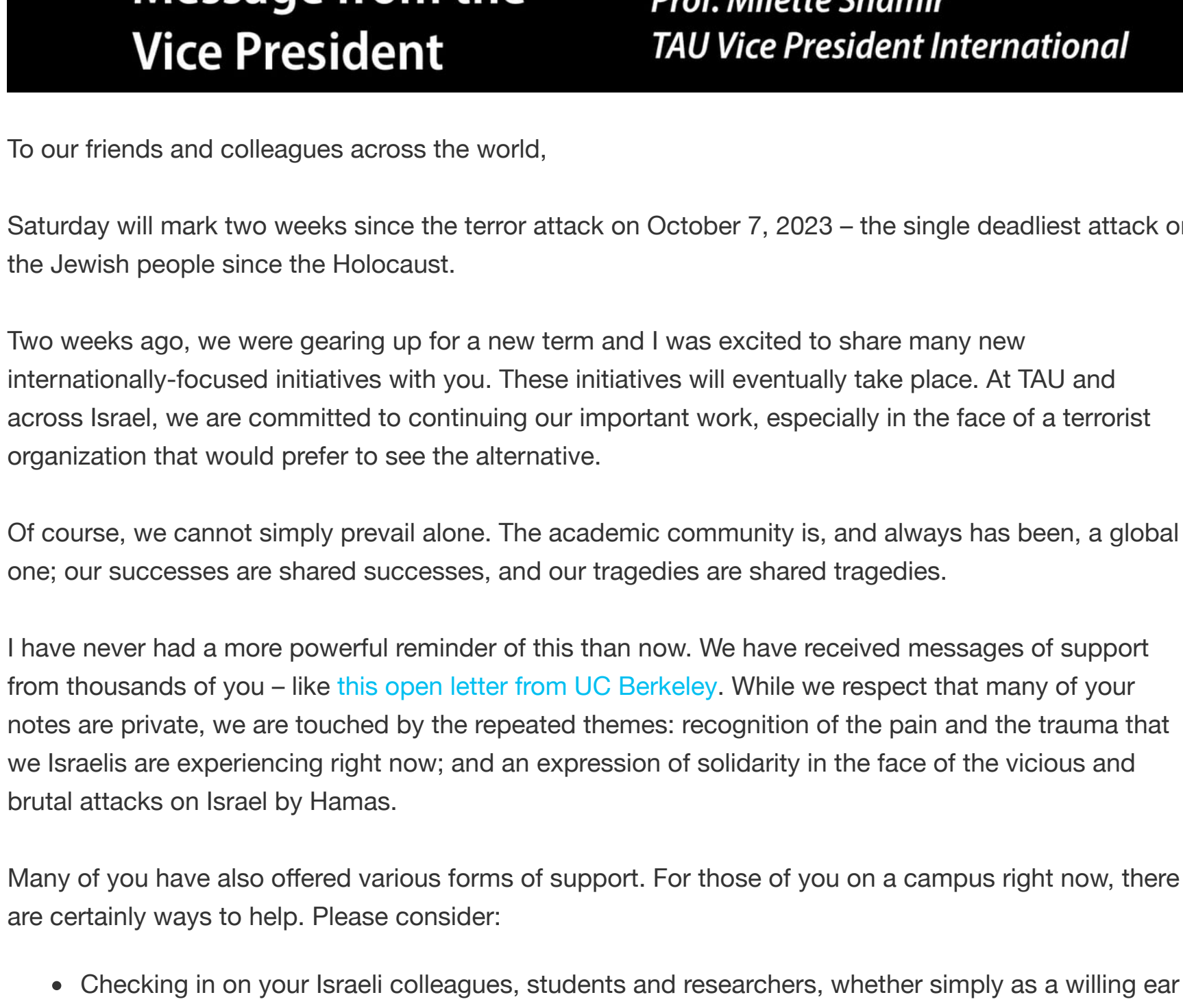




TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
The Lowy International School

The Lowy Quarterly

News & updates from TAU's global home. Thursday, October 19, 2023.



Message from the Vice President Prof. Millette Shamir
TAU Vice President International

To our friends and colleagues across the world,

Saturday will mark two weeks since the terror attack on October 7, 2023 – the single deadliest attack on the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

Two weeks ago, we were gearing up for a new term and I was excited to share many new internationally-focused initiatives with you. These initiatives will eventually take place. At TAU and across Israel, we are committed to continuing our important work, especially in the face of a terrorist organization that would prefer to see the alternative.

Of course, we cannot simply prevail alone. The academic community is, and always has been, a global one; our successes are shared successes, and our tragedies are shared tragedies.

I have never had a more powerful reminder of this than now. We have received messages of support from thousands of you – like [this open letter from UC Berkeley](#). While we respect that many of your notes are private, we are touched by the repeated themes: recognition of the pain and the trauma that we Israelis are experiencing right now; and an expression of solidarity in the face of the vicious and brutal attacks on Israel by Hamas.

Many of you have also offered various forms of support. For those of you on a campus right now, there are certainly ways to help. Please consider:

- Checking in on your Israeli colleagues, students and researchers, whether simply as a willing ear or to connect them with services and supports;
- Recommitting to collaborations with your colleagues at Israeli universities – consider even setting aside funding for new joint academic projects;
- Inviting one of our experts from TAU to join any panel you may be holding on the Israel-Hamas war; and,
- Reaching out to your collaborators and colleagues here in Israel (we really do love hearing from you) and speaking up for them using any platform you have.

As we now look ahead to the coming days and weeks, it is hard to predict exactly what will unfold. But what I can tell you is that I will continue to be dedicated to TAU's international community, that TAU is doubling down on its commitments to academic excellence, and that we will see better days, together.

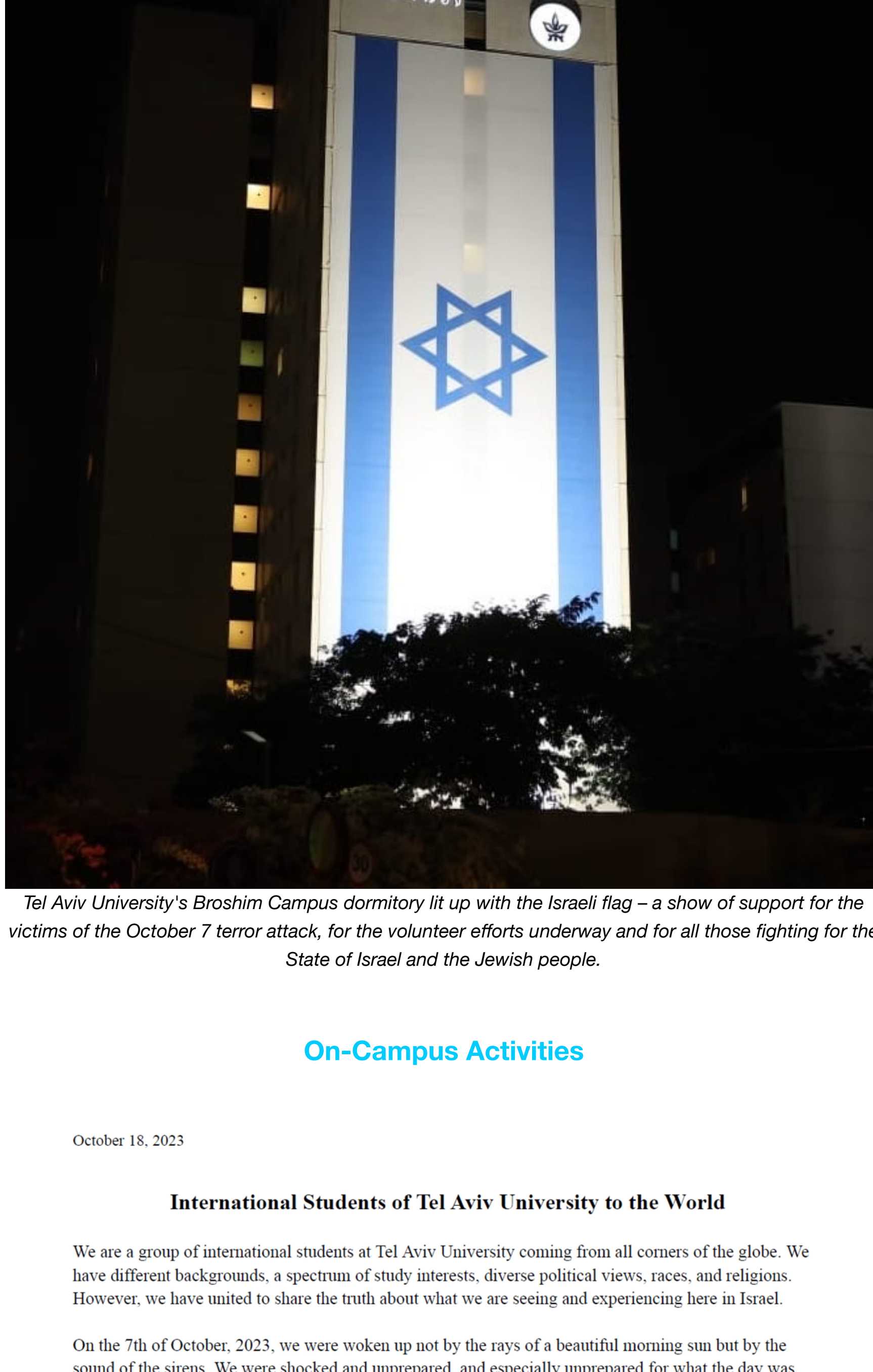
Yours,
Millette

Informational Updates

- **Beginning of Term** – International degree programs are starting in a hybrid format on Sunday, October 22, whereas Hebrew programs are now scheduled to begin on November 5. The later date for the wider TAU community is because many Israeli TAU students are currently in the army reserve (*milum*). Our priority right now is supporting all students how best we can. For those international students who have joined us, we are dedicated to providing an excellent education; having something productive and positive to safely focus on is important right now.
- **Staying Informed** – The IDF is providing daily updates in English on the war; see [their recent post](#) on the rocket launch that hit a Gazan hospital.
- **View from TAU** – A number of our TAU experts have been in the media. Watch [Harel Chorev \(Moshe Dayan Center\) talk to CNN](#) about the underground network of tunnels in Gaza; watch [Arch Rudnitzky \(Moshe Dayan Center\) give France 24 an overview of the war and key considerations](#); and read an interview with [Michael Milstein \(Palestinian Studies Forum\) in New York Magazine](#) on what Israel is missing regarding Hamas.
- **On-Campus Activities** – We've launched a new buddy program (read more about it below), and are offering safe guarding and volunteering opportunities on campus. Contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188 to learn more.
- **Safety** – All members of the international community are instructed to follow the safety procedures in place. Currently, residents of greater Tel Aviv are asked to stay near secure areas. There are many secure areas across TAU and in the dorms. For more information on safety protocols, see the FAQ below.
- **Mental Health** – TAU has significantly expanded the scope of psychological services available to the university community, including international students. There is a 24/7 mental health support line available, with services in English; if you or someone you know is struggling, please contact the Student Life Team, who is on call 24/7 at 052-5346188.
- **Working with Embassies** – We are in continual contact with embassies and we support members of our international community here on campus in making the decision that is right for them. Should you choose to stay, you will be supported here and we will do everything we can to ensure your comfort. Should you wish to go, we will also support you and suggest you contact our Student Life Team.

Spotlight on Campus

Am Yisrael Chai



Tel Aviv University's Broshim Campus dormitory lit up with the Israeli flag – a show of support for the victims of the October 7 terror attack, for the volunteer efforts underway and for all those fighting for the State of Israel and the Jewish people.

On-Campus Activities

October 18, 2023

International Students of Tel Aviv University to the World

We are a group of international students at Tel Aviv University coming from all corners of the globe. We have different backgrounds, a spectrum of study interests, diverse political views, races, and religions. However, we have united to share the truth about what we are seeing and experiencing here in Israel.

On the 7th of October, 2023, we were woken up not by the rays of a beautiful morning sun but by the sound of the sirens. We were shocked and appalled, and especially unprepared for what the day was about to bring. With every passing hour, it became more and more clear that we woke up to war, to a new reality where Israel was attacked by the terrorist group Hamas. It is hard to believe how many horrific things happened during the past week. From the Tel-Aviv area, we began to hear news from the south of the country about the terrorists massacring young people in a peace festival, about killing, raping, and kidnapping innocent people, about massive bombings leading to the complete destruction of various villages and the death of hundreds of citizens. Not to mention the barbaric acts of beheading kids or recording the torturing of hostages. We believe that the world needs to see and recognize that these are nothing other than acts of terrorism.

We are writing these words on a day when Israeli soldiers are still sacrificing their lives to defend their brothers and sisters, innocent people are kept hostage, and we grow anxious every time we hear the sirens. In the meantime, we hear sounds even more concerning than those coming from the battle, voices of people who justify the attacks, support the terror, and remain blind to the fact that this is more than just "a regular conflict in the Middle East." Hearing that, we decided that we can not remain silent. We decided to use our knowledge and international perspective to raise the awareness of societies worldwide. This time, it is not about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. What is happening in Israel right now is a threat to all humans everywhere, and therefore all should unite against it.

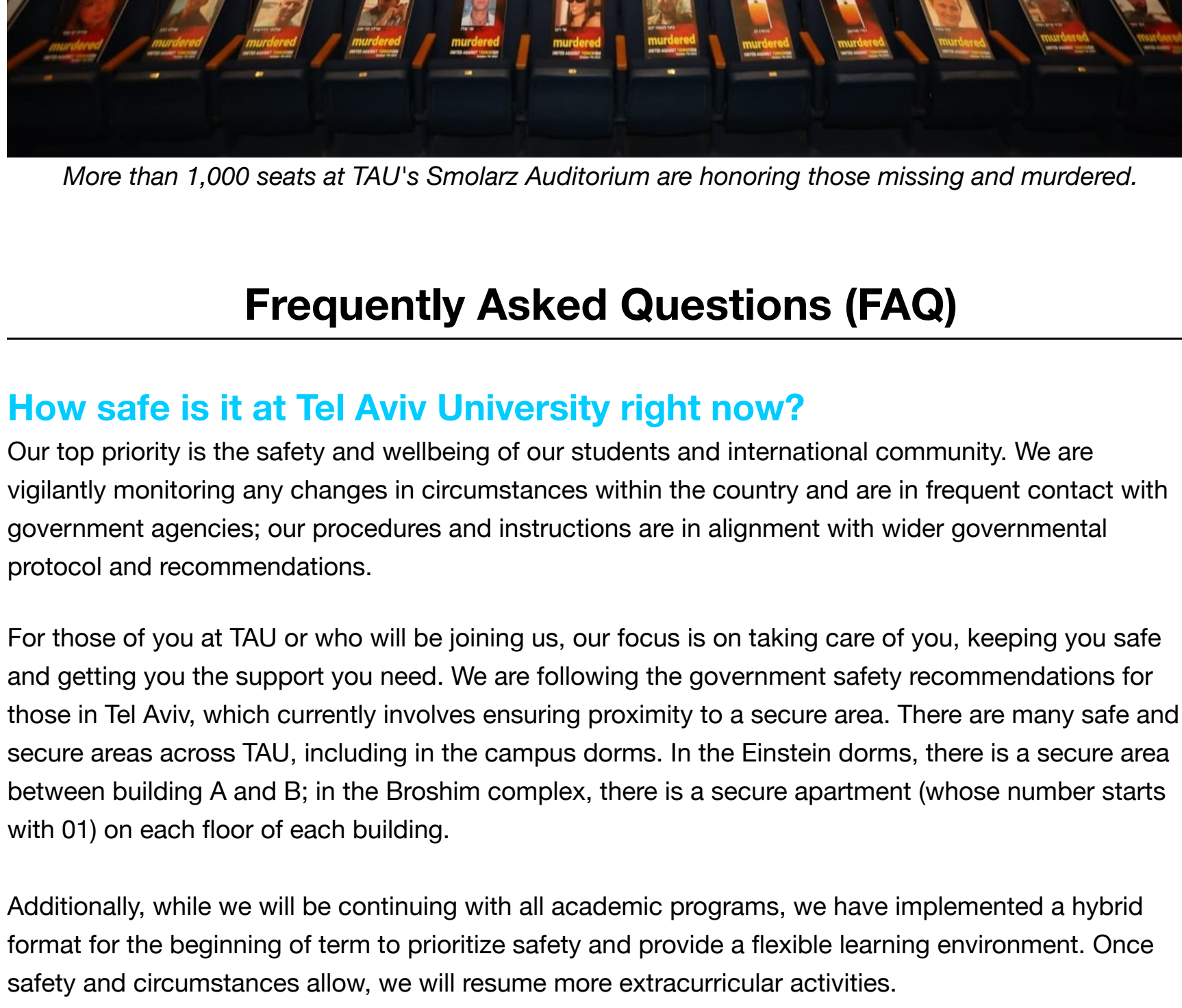
We stand with humanity. We believe this is not a war of Israelis against Palestinians or Jews against Arabs. This is a war of humanity against terrorism, of good versus evil.

Signed,

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|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Ina Memaj, Albania | Alon Shepon, Israel | Denis Dmitriev, Russia |
| Demian Aisicovich, Argentina | Elié Francois, Israel | Dmitri Sukhanov, Russia |
| Maia Bornstein, Argentina | Erica Katzin, Israel | Dolgor Baldorzhieva, Russia |
| Pablo Rodriguez Ostreicher, Argentina | Oleg Moshtin, Israel | Tatyana Ilizarova, Russia |
| Loren Kertsman, Austria | Rodney John, Israel | Eugene L., Singapore |
| Elvin Khayiev, Azerbaijan | Anamika Kumari, India | Adam Angel, South Africa |
| Rafael Nabizada, Azerbaijan | Anway Pradhan, India | Tyla Shur, South Africa |
| Carole Hitter, Belgium, Israel | Chaitanya Patel, India | Ming Jin, South Korea |
| Giovanna Melo, Brazil | Chaitanya Patel, India | Pia Ying Huang, Taiwan |
| Suzana Amlac, Stenberg, Brazil | Deepan Chowdhury, India | Alexander Viches, Ukraine |
| Avery Devento, Canada | Dhiring Jidagave, India | Mikhailo Rozhkov, Ukraine |
| Ben Bright, Canada | Lakshminarasath Upapapati, India | Tanya Albrecht, Ukraine |
| Melissa Greenspan, Canada | Mahadeep Kaur, India | Valeria Svirskia, Ukraine |
| Rebekah Pecharnikov, Canada | Meera Cheviri, India | Margherita Calice, United Kingdom |
| Shahar Lazarev, Canada | Minal Kashyap, India | Alex Blecker, United States |
| Xinena Silberman, Chile | Poulami Chakraborty, India | Amika Haaser, United States |
| Ping an Li, China | Prakash Varkey Cheian, India | Art Spelman, United States |
| Wei Zeng, China | Prince Subhadraishi, India | Batya Goldberg, United States |
| Zhi Li, China | Pudhendra Mani, India | Benny Rushfield, United States |
| Zhiyi Cai, China | Sagnik Bhowa, India | David Gutman, United States |
| Santiago Sarmiento, Colombia | Shiven Nath, India | Ella Nudell, United States |
| Alisa Gumerova, Czech Republic | Sreyashi Bhownick, India | Elisha Hechting, United States |
| Teriza Beckova, Czech Republic | Iori Saeki, Japan | Elisheva Ely, United States |
| Alexandra Ruf, Ecuador | Daniel Ganda, Kenya | Eva Fabian, United States, Israel |
| Amber Demeure, France | Emmanuel Opondo, Kenya | Gabriella Jacobs, United States |
| Anis Herblion, France | Putriy Mumbi Muehoki, Kenya | Kat Lacey, United States |
| David Natif, France | Alex Mulbah, Liberia | Karla Goldberger, United States |
| Nina Wesler, France | Ieva Vebrate Adereht, Lithuania | Larry French, United States |
| Denise Chisom Joeschke, Germany | Maria Elial, Malia | Jordyn Engel, United States |
| Gina Krymalowski, Germany | Andree Garza Diaz Barriga, Mexico | Joshua Levin, United States |
| Froya Pein, Germany | Migal Becerrich, Mexico | Rachel Thau, United States |
| Janka Hoefer, Germany | Paola Perez Gallardo Garbay, Mexico | Rina Poran, United States |
| Maria Heusch, Germany | Markus McCraith, New Zealand | Samantha Treck, United States |
| Marian Blok, Germany | Veronica Igbohe, Nigeria | Sander Ashman, United States |
| Philipp Hofmann, Germany | Zofia Sznajder, Poland | Sarah Carr, United States |
| Sofiane Schulz, Germany, United States | Catia Carvalho, Portugal | Shoshana Markowitz, United States |
| Evangelia Akridou, Greece | Res, Portugal | Sophie Humphers, United States |
| Michael Kitsos, Greece, United States | Razvan Mocanu, Romania | Tama Ford, United States |
| Anamaria Balogh, Hungary | Anastasia Mikamis, Russia | Yael Shimlovitz, United States |
| Edvin Gobanyi, Hungary | Evgeniy Rodnyansky, Russia | Yaron Ginsberg, United States |
| | Israel | Zey Huneycunt, United States |
| | | Luis Hamel, Venezuela |

An Open Letter from the TAU International Task Force.

- **TAU International Task Force** – Our international students at TAU, through a new task force they created aimed at countering disinformation and antisemitism, are now meeting daily on Zoom to strategize how they can share the story of what they're encountering on-the-ground in Israel. Above is the open letter they recently penned, which received approximately 120 signatures from TAU international students. You can [learn more about the task force's story here](#). Are you on campus and want to join? Contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188.
- **New Buddy Program** – We recently launched The Lowy International School and TAU Student Union Buddy Program. The purpose of the program is to help international students integrate into their academic, cultural and linguistic life here on campus by pairing up with an Israeli TAU student. So far, we have 30 international exchange and study abroad students participating (along with 20 Israeli volunteers). Want to participate? You can [sign up here](#).
- **Housing for Sderot Victims** – Sderot was one of the most severely affected areas of the tragic terrorist attack on October 7. TAU is now hosting 10 refugee families from Sderot in our campus dormitories and is continuing to do more.
- **Holding Space for Victims** – TAU's Smolarz Auditorium is currently the site of a memorial for those missing and murdered as a result of the October 7 terrorist attacks. On each of the auditorium's 1,000+ seats is a picture and name of a victim. Called "United Against Terrorism," and led by the Student Union in collaboration with TAU, the project aims to demonstrate the magnitude of the horror that has taken place. [Learn more.](#)



More than 1,000 seats at TAU's Smolarz Auditorium are honoring those missing and murdered.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- 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 Einstein 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.
- Additionally, while we will be continuing with all of our academic programs, we have implemented a hybrid format for the beginning of term to prioritize safety and provide a flexible learning environment. Once safety and circumstances allow, we will resume more extracurricular activities.
- 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 official guidelines and protocol. Classes for international degree programs will begin in a hybrid format on Sunday, October 22. We will resume planned extracurricular activities and in-person classes when appropriate.
- 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?**
- Currently there are restrictions on both educational and extracurricular activities.
- For those enrolled in international degree programs (e.g., bachelor's, master's) educational classes have been postponed to begin on Sunday, October 22 and will be offered initially through a hybrid format to prioritize safety and provide flexibility.
- 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 security police and army); we do not allow trips to any areas prohibited or deemed unsafe.
- I need help with arranging travel/catering 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 code (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 during the types 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?**
- Sirens are part of the "Iron Dome" system in Israel, which alerts and protects 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.
- 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 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.
- 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 on changes in protocol for this newsletter is otherwise one of the best ways to receive any updates directly 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.

CONTACT US

The Lowy International School
The Lowy International School
Carter Building
Ramat Aviv
Israel, 6997801
Tel: +972-73-3804534
study@taux.tau.ac.il

View our offices in your country

Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube