



TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY
The Lowy International School

The Lowy Quarterly

News & updates from TAU's global home. Thursday, October 12, 2023.



Message from the President

Prof. Ariel Porat
President of Tel Aviv University

Dear faculty, staff, students, and friends,

Let me begin by expressing deep, almost unbearable sorrow for the death of over 1,200 women, men, and children, murdered or killed in the horrific crime perpetrated against the Jewish people in its homeland. I am immensely grieved by the death of 11 of our students and relatives of our faculty members, who have been murdered or killed in this atrocious attack. Their names can be found in this link which, sadly, we are updating as information flows in.

May their memory be blessed.

Almost a week has gone by since the brutal massacre, and the enormous emotional burden grows heavier every day. We are burying our dead; we are exposed to more and more atrocities; we were devastated to discover that even small infants were not spared from the slaughter, and we are desperately concerned for the fate of the hostages. Indeed, such personal torment and nationwide anguish we have never known in the state of Israel, and the end is nowhere in sight.

TAU has harnessed all its strength and abilities to support the nationwide efforts. We have established an emergency fund to provide financial assistance, and considerably reinforced the psychological services offered to the TAU community, including opening hotlines in both Hebrew and English. Our faculties and schools are personally contacting students who live in southern Israel or serve in the armed forces. We are hosting families of our students from the south in the TAU dorms.

Together with the Student Union, TAU is recruiting volunteers from the TAU community, to help wherever help is needed. We are extremely proud of our Student Union, who are collecting food, clothing, medical equipment, and other necessities for mobilized soldiers and residents of southern Israel who have become refugees in their own land. In the coming days we will look for faculty members who can offer assistance in their own areas of expertise – such as social work, dentistry, various fields of medicine, psychology, law, etc. In fact, volunteer activities have already begun in the Schools of Dentistry and Social Work. We are turning to faculty, staff, and students, to ask whether they wish to host Israelis from the south in their own homes.

But while we hurt and grieve, as individuals and as a nation, there are those who applaud the bloodshed. In places around the world, including the campuses of some renowned universities, we witness rising BDS activities, justifying the atrocities perpetrated by the butchers of Hamas. It is very hard to read or watch these posts in the social networks. It is hard to observe the fecklessness of certain leaders of academic institutions, who do not do enough to prevent this abuse of freedom of speech. Freedom of speech is not an absolute right. It must be trumped by the sanctity of life and the value of personal safety. It cannot protect expressions of hatred or incitement to murder and violence. I would expect my colleagues, heads of academic institutions, especially in the USA, to treat students and personnel who justify the slaughter as they would have treated anyone who justified the events of 9/11. I would expect them to condemn – clearly, firmly, and unequivocally – the horrendous massacre that has taken place in our land. Some have done so. But others have not.

Against this background, TAU is adding media outreach to its tasks. Some of our international students are already doing very valuable work in this respect. With the help of our Student Union, we are recruiting students who will operate in the social networks, to refute the terrible lies that might influence naïve, unknowing audiences who are unaware of what our enemy has done to us.

Finally, I must speak of expressions of hatred and incitement right here on campus. A few of our students have expressed support for the atrocities of Hamas. Their number is very small, but that detracts nothing from the gravity of this phenomenon. We will be very strict with this handful of students, and when we feel the offense is criminal in nature, we shall report them to the police. We will act swiftly, as required in this sensitive situation, but will not deny any student the right to a fair investigation of the facts. A society is tested in its difficult hours – and none are more difficult than those we are experiencing today. Democracy and human rights are not to be suspended in wartime. If anything, their importance increases.

At the same time, we are seeing deplorable incitement from extremists against some of our own students, whose only fault is being Arab. The Hamas murderers made no distinction between Jews and Arabs, and in their despicable attack many Arab Israelis were also killed and injured. The phenomenon of incitement against Arabs on our campus is of small proportions, but it shall not be overlooked. Inciters of any kind will not be tolerated. As noted above, a society is tested in its hour of calamity. TAU will serve as a model in this matter as well.

I wish you all better days.

Yours sincerely,

Ariel

Informational Updates

- **On-Campus Activities** – Want to help? Be with others? There are a number of on-campus volunteering activities and meetups for those who want to help, chat and find community. Contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188 to get involved.
- **Donations** – There are many ways to donate and contribute, including from abroad. Find some organizations needing your support below.
- **Working with Embassies** – We are in continual contact with embassies and are in alignment with their general direction; 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.
- **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 secure areas across TAU and in the dorms. For more information on safety protocols, see the FAQ below.
- **Mental Health** – TAU is significantly expanding 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.
- **Staying Informed** – We will be communicating updates to our international community through this newsletter, as well as on the [Important Updates in Light of the Security Situation](#) webpage.

Spotlight on Campus

Local Heroes



Yishai is a friend and employee of ours at The Lowy International School; he is now fighting for Israel and sending messages of hope, unity and strength from the frontline. Our thoughts are with Yishai and the many from TAU and across the country who are fighting for the State of Israel.

On-Campus Activities

- **TAU International Task Force** – Our international students at TAU, many with impressive backgrounds in communications, have now formed a new task force aimed at countering disinformation and antisemitism by sharing information from on-the-ground sources in Israel. They will be working with two professors on engaging influencers and forming a social media strategy to better share with the world firsthand knowledge, stories and facts. Are you on campus and want to join? Contact the Student Life Team at 052-5346188.
- **Housing for Sderot Victims** – Sderot was one of the most severely affected areas of the tragic terrorist attack last Saturday. TAU is currently housing six refugee families from Sderot in our campus dormitories, and we are looking to do more.
- **American Friends of Tel Aviv University (AFTAU)** – AFTAU aims to raise awareness and funds to support Tel Aviv University (TAU). TAU's emergency fund is dedicated to psychological services, financial aid and combat-soldier scholarships for students at the University. [Donate to Tel Aviv University's emergency fund.](#)
- **Student Union Donation and Collection Operation** – The student-operated drive at TAU has been running for two days now and is just getting started. Dozens of cars carrying hundreds of cartons of non-perishable food, supplies (hygiene products, medicine, etc.) and toys have already been sent to the south. The drive is also working with local restaurants (one restaurant donated 60 cartons) and is collecting money (about \$10,000 raised thus far). Tomorrow, volunteers will be buying warm clothes (clicking on the QR code below). Collections are being made in person and via the Israeli Paybox App (click on the QR code below).



FRIDAY
13 / 10 / 23

DONATION COLLECTION OPERATION

ON BEHALF OF THE STUDENTS OF TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY

WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY HELP IN OBTAINING:

PASTRIES, CHALLA BREAD, WARM CLOTHING,

UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS, DRY FOOD, MEDICAL

AND HYGIENE EQUIPMENT, ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS,

BOXES AND OTHER THINGS THAT COME TO MIND.



LOCATION ON GOOGLE MAPS/NAZE:

GATE 7, ANTIN SQUARE (JAPNICA)

TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY

HOURS: 11:00 - 17:00

CONTACT NUMBERS:

052-698-5242 DANIEL YARON (BIT DONATIONS)

054-799-9093 HILLA ROSENBERG



The TAU Student Union Donation and Collection Operation in action.

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 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.

Additionally, while we will be continuing with all 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 recently held an online orientation session and are looking to organize additional orientation sessions and small gathering opportunities in accordance with current official guidelines and protocol. Classes for all 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.

Educational classes have been postponed by one week 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 government 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?

Sirens 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.

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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