

13 FEBRUARY 2024 – MEDIA STATEMENT

The Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) statement on the Israel-Palestine Crisis.

The TUSA acknowledges the complexities of the current situation for individuals in our state affected by the events in Gaza and Israel. At this challenging time, we encourage all students and staff to extend understanding, kindness, and support to those who may be impacted, in line with our ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of learning and knowledge.

The TUSA remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguarding the safety and welfare of students, in line with our core mission of advancing education. We acknowledge the concerning trends of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism impacting Muslim and Jewish students within and beyond campus boundaries. Just as we reject the notion that Hamas represents the broader Palestinian community, we categorically reject the notion that the actions of the Israeli Government are a reflection of Jewish values or represent the aspirations of the entire Australian Jewish community.

The TUSA condemns the actions of Hamas militants on 7 October 2023, which saw 1,200 people killed in Israel and around another 250 taken hostage.ⁱ

The TUSA also condemns the now over 18-week long offensive conducted by the Israeli Defence Forces that has seen over 28,300 Palestinians killed since 7 October 2023 at a rate of over 200 people each day, two-thirds of them women and children,ⁱⁱ and the widespread damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure in Gaza, including education facilities, hospitals, churches, and mosques.ⁱⁱⁱ

The TUSA calls for a ceasefire on humanitarian grounds. The TUSA also urges the Israeli Government to comply with the mandated provisional measures made by the International

Court of Justice on 26 January 2024.^{iv}

The TUSA stands in opposition to the illegal occupation of Palestinian land, and the risk of ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, by the Israeli Government.^v

The TUSA supports the UN Security Council's view that the Israeli Government's settlements in West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are illegal.^{vi}

The TUSA calls for an end to the oppression of Palestinian people through the use of excessive violence perpetrated by the Israeli Government, illegal settlers and the Israeli Defence Force.^{vii}

We recognise that the occupation and treatment of Palestinian lives have seen credible allegations of ongoing violations of international human rights and international humanitarian law as established by the 1949 Geneva Conventions.^{viii}

We also recognise research which shows that the Israeli Government has engaged in crimes against humanity of persecution and of apartheid.^{ix}

Additionally, we acknowledge those Palestinians that are presently being held in administrative detention without charge or trial.^x

The TUSA is committed to uplifting the voices of those affected students and staff and protecting their right to demonstrate and voice their lived experience. The TUSA will oppose any policies that may seek to prohibit valid criticism of the Israeli Government, illegal settlers and the Israeli Defence Force by students or staff.

The TUSA denounces hate speech and bigotry of any kind. We are committed to inclusivity for all students that appreciates the unique ethnocultural and faith-based experiences of our students.

This stance adopted by the TUSA is a reflection of our values and principles which we hold and the previous positions we have taken in supporting and acknowledging the atrocities and injustices across the broader Australian landscape.

ENQUIRIES: President Liam McLaren, President@TUSA.utas.edu.au

If you, or anyone you know needs support or assistance:

[Student Advocacy Service - TUSA](#)

[Student Legal Service - TUSA](#)

[Safe and Fair Community Unit | University of Tasmania](#)

[Counselling and wellbeing | University of Tasmania](#)

[Student Advisors | University of Tasmania](#)

[Campus Security | University of Tasmania](#)

[International Student Advisors | University of Tasmania](#)

[Accessibility Advisors | University of Tasmania](#)

[Online safety | eSafety Commissioner](#)

ⁱ United Nations – Human Rights Office on 12 January 2024 - [Israel -Occupied Palestinian Territory situation, 100 days on | OHCHR](#).

ⁱⁱ United Nations (UN) Security Council on 22 November 2023 - [Two Thirds of Gaza War Dead Are Women and Children, Briefers Say, as Security Council Debates Their Plight | UN Press](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations - Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Office on 12 February 2024 - [Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported impact | Day 128 | United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - occupied Palestinian territory \(ochaopt.org\)](#); United Nations News Update on 7 November 2023 - [UPDATED: Israel-Palestine crisis: UN humanitarian plea for 'access, access, access' | UN News](#).

^{iv} International Court of Justice on 26 January 2024 - [Order of 26 January 2024 | INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE \(icj-cij.org\)](#).

^v International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel on 5 September 2023 - [n2326071.pdf \(un.org\)](#); United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on 14 October 2023 - [UN expert warns of new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, calls for immediate ceasefire | OHCHR](#).

^{vi} United Nations Security Council on 23 December 2023 - [02334.pdf \(unscr.com\)](#).

^{vii} International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel on 5 September 2023 - [n2326071.pdf \(un.org\)](#); United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on 14 October 2023 - [UN expert warns of new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, calls for immediate ceasefire | OHCHR](#).

^{viii} UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia - [Palestine, the Occupation and the Fourth Geneva Convention: Facts and Figures, 2014 \(unesywa.org\)](#); International Commission of Jurists on 10 October 2023 - [Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory: immediately end attacks on civilians | International Commission of Jurists \(icj.org\)](#); Human Rights Watch on 22 November 2022 -

[Israel/Palestine: Joint Support for Call for a Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention 1949 | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#).

^{ix} Human Rights Watch on 19 July 2021 - [Israeli Apartheid: "A Threshold Crossed" | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#); Amnesty International on 1 February 2022 - [Israel's apartheid against Palestinians - Amnesty International](#); Human Rights Watch on 19 July 2021 - [Israeli Apartheid: "A Threshold Crossed" | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#).

^{xx} Human Rights Watch on 3 October 2023 - [Unprecedented Repression Demands Unprecedented Response | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#)