

Dear AEN Members,

We would not normally correspond with you on Shabbat or during holidays, but the unfolding shocking and heartbreaking situation in Israel requires our response.

Earlier today, the Iranian-backed Hamas terrorist organization launched a full-scale surprise attack and invasion of Israel - infiltrating communities in Israel's south, massacring civilians and taking hostages, and indiscriminately firing thousands of rockets and missiles at population centers throughout the country. While reports are still coming in, at the time of this writing over 300 Israelis have reportedly been murdered, more than 1,000 have been wounded, and many are missing and unaccounted for. Dozens of women, children, and the elderly have reportedly been kidnapped and taken into Gaza.

The scenes coming out of Israel are terrifying and devastating.

AEN has a number of faculty members who are currently on sabbatical teaching or researching at Israeli universities and other academic centers and institutes. At this time of crisis, we stand with them and with our many other colleagues, partners, friends, and family members throughout Israel. Our deepest sympathies lie with the victims. We wish a swift recovery to those injured, and we pray for the safety of all innocents now in harm's way, a full recovery to those who have been injured, and a speedy return of all hostages.

While we await further updates, we note with dismay that today's horrifying and tragic events are already being exploited by Israel's detractors on campus, and that some are even justifying the assault. The effort to counter the misinformation that will inevitably spread - and which will further negatively impact the campus climate for Jews, Zionists, and Israelis - will require our resolve and resilience.

In the days and weeks ahead, the AEN leadership team stands ready to support your efforts to communicate factually accurate information about this unparalleled assault on the Israeli people to university leaders, faculty colleagues, and students. We will soon reach out again so that we can best assist you in your efforts to educate your campuses and other academic communities.

In closing, we share today's powerful words [posted](#) to social media by AEN's Advisory Board member [Irwin Cotler](#): "Terrorism and its accompanying incitement and criminality should never be given a free pass, as too often has happened. Justice and accountability for Hamas' ongoing heinous aggression, as well as for all those who continue to aid and abet it, is long overdue."

Sincerely,



Miriam F. Elman, Ph.D.  
Executive Director



Raeefa Shams  
Director of Communications and Programming