

The Executive Board

Date

15-02-2024

By email

Subject

Request evaluation institutional ties –  
Right of Initiative

**Our reference**

UR/RA/38706

**Your reference**

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**Enclosure**

**Department**

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Dear members of the Executive Board,

I hope this message finds you well. The tumultuous events in the Middle East over the past few months have left our community in shock and prompted us to reflect on our institution's commitment to its affiliations.

We wish to draw your attention to the urgency of this matter. The gravity of the situation, coupled with the ongoing crisis, compels us to seek an immediate evaluation of our institutional ties with the states of Israel and Palestine.

Our university, in alignment with our principles, has established a network of partner universities. While there is currently no partnership with a university in the state of Palestine, we do maintain an exchange partnership with Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan, Israel. Therefore, we would like to scrutinize our institutional ties with Bar Ilan University in Israel, attached to this letter we have placed resources about the relations between the Israeli state, military forces and Bar Ilan University. The council furthermore offers to assist in this process, when necessary, as we deem ethical considerations with regards to our institutional ties of a high priority.

The allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity attributed to the state of Israel, as confirmed by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, UNICEF, Amnesty, and the Human Rights Watch, have raised significant concerns regarding violations of international laws and humanitarian rights. In the preliminary hearing on the 26th of January, the International Court of Justice has found it "plausible" that Israel has committed acts that violate the Genocide 1948 Convention. Therefore, the International Court of Justice issued an order directing the state of Israel to implement provisional measures aimed at safeguarding the Palestinian people from a "real and imminent risk of irreparable

harm." This legal context underscores the gravity of the situation and the need for careful consideration of our institutional ties, particularly with entities within the state of Israel.

Recognizing our university's longstanding commitment to fostering an environment of peace, tolerance, and respect, we feel it is necessary to request an assessment of our ties with Bar Ilan University from the Executive Board. We would also like to request access to the utilized policy documents and kindly request to receive them as attachments to your response letter.

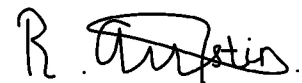
We further implore the Executive Board to pledge to sever these ties if a substantiated case of genocide is established, in accordance with the findings of relevant international entities such as the ICJ. Emphasizing transparency and ethical considerations is crucial to ensuring that our university remains resolute in upholding its principles.

Kind regards,

On behalf of the University Council,

I. Cune-Noten  
University Council Chair

R.S.C. Austin  
University Council Clerk



Appendix 1 – some initial sources on relations between the Israeli state, military forces and Bar Ilan university

Relation to Israeli Defence Forces (IDF)

BESA Center publications and policy recommendations are directed towards senior Israeli decision-makers in military and civilian life (...). Bar-Ilan U. grants students who are in IDF reserve duty emergency funds

The BESA Center at Bar-Ilan University held a conference in collaboration with IDF Ground Forces.

Relation to Israel Security Agency (ISA) / Shin Bet

Bar-Ilan University offers a bachelor's degree for IDF and Shin Bet officers. <https://overland.org.au/2023/05/universities-as-tools-of-apartheid/>