



STATEMENT BY DAR al-KALIMA UNIVERSITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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We, the faculty, staff, and students of Dar al-Kalima University (DAK) in Bethlehem, Palestine, stand together in shock, grief, and rage at the inconceivable violence rained down upon the Palestinian people in Gaza.

While we condemn all violence perpetrated against innocent civilians, we are appalled by the ongoing onslaught and bombing against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including the use of white phosphorus. Our thoughts and hearts are with our students and staff in Gaza, and with the thousands of others, whose dreams of freedom and education have been cut short by the current onslaught, including Muhammad Sami Qraiqeh, a volunteer at our [Gaza Training Center](#). We also grieve over the loss of the artist Hiba Zaqout and her family, who were buried under the rubble of their home by an Israeli airstrike.

Since October [7 over 4651](#) Palestinians have been killed, including more than [1756 children](#). We are appalled by the Israeli bombing of 24 hospitals, 176 schools, several cultural sites and hundreds of residential buildings, as well as places of worship, including [31 mosques](#) and the assembly hall of the historical Greek Orthodox Church of Saint Porphyrius. The deliberate starvation of Palestinian civilians by depriving them of access to water, food, electricity, and medical supplies, indisputably constitute war crimes under international law. The forced displacement of a million Palestinians and the indiscriminate bombing that resulted in the obliteration of entire families, is decried by [Amnesty International](#) as “damning evidence of war crimes.”

As Palestinian academics, students and cultural workers residing under Israel’s military occupation, we have consistently highlighted the Israeli regime’s genocidal intent, which manifest through intertwined [systems of apartheid](#), military occupation, and settler-colonialism.

While the ongoing siege and bombing in Gaza continue, we in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, endure a blockade that further fragments and isolates our communities. Our cities, villages and refugee camps are confined by cement blocks, checkpoints, and gates, which prevent students from different regions of the West Bank from reaching their schools. The violence perpetrated by Israel’s occupation forces and illegal armed [settlers](#) [has significantly increased](#) since Oct 7, with “an average of almost eight incidents per day” according to OCHA. Within the same period, close to hundred Palestinians have been killed by the occupation forces and Jewish settlers. The occupation forces night raids have increased and resulted in the [doubling of the number of Palestinian prisoners](#) in Israel’s jails and detention camps to over 10,000 prisoners.

Our community within the Israeli state, 1948 borders, is encountering violence, discrimination, and unprecedented suppression of freedom of expression. The arrest of [singer Dalal Abu Amneh](#) highlights the extent of suppression by the Israeli regime.

We are shocked by the inaction of the international community and the indifference towards Israel’s 75 years of violations, non-compliance with international law and international



humanitarian law, including the 56 years of military occupation and the 16 years siege of the Gaza Strip.

The faculty, staff, and students of Dar al-Kalima University in Bethlehem in occupied Palestine, steadfastly affirm the inalienable rights of the indigenous Palestinian people: the right to liberation, self-determination, and the right of refugees to return to their homeland.

We demand an immediate ceasefire, the lifting of the suffocating siege, and an embargo on the supply of weapons to Israel. We salute the citizens of the world for their unwavering solidarity and support. From Palestine, we send a resounding message to the world: our path to freedom can only be achieved through our collective struggle for liberty, equality, and rights.