

November 1st 2023

A call from the leadership of the Israel Statistics & Data Science Association to the leadership of the American Statistical Association

Dear colleagues,

We are writing to you during one of the most terrible periods our country has experienced. In the last few days the horrific magnitude and the level of barbaric atrocities committed by the Hamas terror group on Israeli citizens in their homes on October 7th is unveiling in front of our eyes. The Hamas murdered more than 1400 people, including families and young children, raping young women, burning babies and massacring youngsters who attended an open-air music festival. In addition, the Hamas have abducted over 230 individuals, including elderly, women and children who are being held in life-threatening conditions in the Gaza strip. In a cynical turn of events racism in the form of antisemitism has risen on campuses across the US.

We must emphasize that Hamas atrocities do not reflect just another round in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This event amounts to a crime against humanity and should be treated as such.

Following numerous personal messages from stunned colleagues around the globe inquiring about our wellbeing and voicing deep concerns about the hostages, we approached you, the leadership of ASA, our sister organization, asking to hear your clear voice condemning the appalling terrorist attack and calling for the immediate release of the hostages. You then kindly asked us about specific ways the ASA could help statisticians and data scientists in Israel.

Members of our two organizations, the Israeli and American, are friends and colleagues, collaborating frequently in scientific work, and meeting regularly at conferences. Moreover, many of you were our teachers and mentors. Now, we are experiencing a traumatic event of horrific magnitude, and our members have lost family members, friends and students in the attack. When horrific crimes against humanity are conducted - a strong response should be heard.

As we all share the belief that science and scientists pursue knowledge for the benefit of humanity and that science has no borders, we call upon you, the leadership of the world's largest community of statisticians to take a firm, loud and clear stand against the brutal, inhuman violence perpetrated on a civilian population. In sending such a message you will join numerous other professional organizations. Such a message in a format of an open letter directed to members of both associations, similar to that published recently by the American Physical

Society (<https://aps.org/about/governance/letters/aps-ips.cfm>), will assist in restoring trust in human values.

We know that we all share the hope that all abductees will return quickly and safely and we expect that all efforts will be made toward this cause. We regret all civilian casualties in this war precipitated by the Hamas attack, especially children. Finally, while the horrific events of October 7 seriously harmed the chances for peace, we still hope that in the future peace will be achieved.

Sincerely

Present and past presidents of the Israel Statistics and Data Science Association

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Prof. Shaul Barlev, Past President

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