

Statement by members of the Stellenbosch University community on the attacks on Gaza

We, members of the Stellenbosch University community, note with deep concern the ongoing massacre and continued mass displacement of the population of Gaza by the Israeli military since 7 October. We are appalled by the mass murder of innocent civilians and are dismayed that the Israeli military has targeted non-combatants in Gaza – men, women and children – in their retaliation against Hamas. While we condemn the actions of Hamas, there is no doubt that Israel is committing war crimes. Its military has killed several thousand civilians in Gaza and even more have been injured and disabled. Much of the infrastructure of the Gaza Strip, including hospitals, homes, and buildings housing humanitarian organisations, have been reduced to rubble. This level of destruction is brutal and barbaric. The extreme trauma of the surviving population continues to worsen as they bury their dead and fear for their lives.

As members of the Stellenbosch University community, we join with countless organisations, NGOs, institutions, and governments around the world in calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. We urgently call for establishing humanitarian corridors so that the injured and sick may be safely evacuated and attended to. We call for medical and health staff to be urgently admitted into Gaza along with crucial resources – water, food, energy, ambulances, field hospitals, and hospital ships. More broadly, we also call for the end to all structural and military violence in Palestine. We believe in a non-violent solution to the Palestinian struggle for human rights and self-determination. To this end, we join in the call for negotiations to ensure a just peace for the Palestinian people.

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