



Yeshiva University Office of the President

My Dear Friends,

Over 350,000 of Israel's sons and daughters have been called to service. But in this war, we are all called to service. This is a fight for Israel, it's a fight for humanity, and it's a fight in which all of our students, alumni and families are enlisted.

In Israel alone we have over 1,000 students in our partner yeshivot, seminaries, Gruss Kollel on RIETS campus, as well as thousands of alumni who have made Aliyah whose children are currently serving in the IDF -- some of whom are already tragic casualties of this war.

We have several current students in our Undergraduate and Graduate schools who have been called to return to Israel to their army units. And, we have an entire collective student body, alumni and friends network who are completely dedicated to supporting Israel during this time.

This is personal, this is not just a war, this is our war. This is an inflection point for YU and the world. Each of us are called to be leaders in the fight against barbarity and inhumanity.

Throughout this difficult week, our YU community has responded in multiple ways. First by strengthening our own security and supporting the mental health of our students and families both in Israel and in America. Second, through a comprehensive effort to channel our resources and students' programs in support of our brothers and sisters in Israel. We are in close contact with our partner seminaries and yeshivot in Israel and are working to support the parents of our students studying in Israel. Finally, as the flagship Jewish university we understand our responsibility to spread the truth of Israel's story throughout the media and the world, and we have engaged in a concerted effort to shed light in the darkness.

Solidarity with Israel:

- Over 1,000 YU students, faculty and staff attended "Stronger Together," our Israel solidarity rally held in Lamport Auditorium on Oct. 11.
- Through testimonials of YU students and staff called to active duty or sending their loved ones off to the IDF, the event was a living demonstration

- of just how connected YU is to Israel and committed to its defense.
- With community friends like Councilmember Carmen De La Rosa and Deputy Manhattan Borough President Aya Keefe also in attendance, we showed our solidarity and unity with Israel, our beloved homeland.
 - We prayed together, learned together, sang together, and gave each other strength.
 - The whole New York community saw our conviction, as the event was covered by numerous local TV news stations, including Fox 5 News, CBS, NBC, ABC, Pix 11 and NY1.



[Click here](#) or on the image above to view a video recap of the event

Security:

- Yeshiva University has taken precautions to ensure that the campuses remain safe and secure.
- The Security Department has been coordinating with the New York City Police Department and will be monitoring the situation closely.
- NYPD has provided additional police and squad cars to patrol near our locations.
- We have worked with our private security company to boost our security presence on site.
- We are partnering with our local elected officials and the Governor's office to seek additional assistance and support.
- Regular email updates will provide essential security information and reminders for students to maintain their safety.



Mayor Eric Adams and Rabbi Hershel Schachter at the pro-Israel rally outside the U.N.

Mental Health and Wellness:

- YU Counseling Center is offering counseling services, supported by Wurzweiler clinicians, to provide additional assistance to those in need.
- YU's Jerusalem Therapy Center in partnership with Amudim is making themselves available to our students in Israel for the year who need their professional counseling services.
- YU Counseling Center met with faculty to discuss strategies for enhancing support for our students and each other.
- The Wurzweiler School of Social Work has organized support groups on Zoom, facilitated by experienced faculty. These groups are available to students both locally and in Israel.
- Rabbis who participated in the Gerontology & Palliative Care certificate program have volunteered to provide support and crisis intervention for our students.
- We have created a comprehensive resource list to help students find assistance, both locally and in Israel.
- Over 600 parents of students in Israel through the SDA program [attended YU's Stronger Together seminar](#) hosted by Dr. Yael Muskat, Dr. David Pelcovitz, and Nechama Munk of Wurzweiler to support them during the crisis.
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Health Advocate provides free, confidential counseling and follow up services that can support staff and

their families during this difficult time.



Academics:

- The Deans have been working with individual students regarding situations where a student returned to the army, supporting students still in Israel and helping students navigate challenges during this time.
- We are in close contact with all of our SDA Israel program affiliate yeshivot and seminaries.
- We are launching a series of seminars to leverage the intellectual prowess of YU's faculty to provide insights on the crisis.

Student Life: A Unified Campus to Support our Students

- Many members of the YU community participated in the large pro-Israel rally outside the U.N. on Oct. 10.
- On Oct. 12, students at Cardozo School of Law held a vigil for those impacted by the devastating terrorist attacks on Israel. The event took place in the student lounge with about 200 Cardozo students and faculty members in attendance.
- Chessed programming: writing letters to chayalim and Red Cross and hosting tzedakah drives.
- Adopt a Soldier: opportunities for students to take a name of a soldier and pray for them daily.
- Learning, Chizuk, Torah, Tehillim, Kumzitz and Tefillah gatherings have been taking place across our campuses.



Supporting our Jewish educators in Israel and America:

- The Azrieli school [held a seminar](#) led by Dean Rona Novick, Dr. David Pelcovitz and Dr. Mordechai Schiffman with over 250 participants. The seminar focused on how to talk to students about war and terrorism in Israel.
- Azrieli is collaborating with GPATS and RIETS students to provide assistance and fill in for Israeli teachers who have been called up to the IDF. This partnership allows us to maintain educational continuity and support students during these challenging times.
- Microsite being set up together with RIETS to provide resources for Jewish educators, students, families and schools.
- Working together with UnitEd from the Israeli Ministry of the Diaspora on programming for Heads of School in North and South America on how to support diverse faculty needs.
- Azrieli consulted with ITalAm on developing curricula to address the current situation for day school students.

Supporting our Rabbis and Communities:

- RIETS is focused on supporting our Rabbis in the field. We have conducted a conference call with over 150 Rabbis throughout the U.S. to provide direction and guidance for their messages during the upcoming Shabbat.
- We are developing Shabbat programming which is dedicated to fostering chizuk (strength) and achdus (unity) in honor of our Musmachim (ordained rabbis). We believe that unity and strength are essential in the current environment.
- Arranging meetings for community rabbis with YU's mental health specialists to help people with trauma.

Pro-Israel Media and Communications:

- I have proudly represented our support for Israel on a variety of media outlets, including the many TV stations who attended our solidarity event, as well as additional in-studio appearances on national networks such as MSNBC and Fox Business, with more appearances forthcoming. It is so important to show the world our solidarity with Israel.

- We are also keeping our community informed with numerous social media posts and daily email updates on the situation in Israel, safety on our campus and how people can help. We have [created a website](#) where our community can find resources and get involved (yu.edu/togetherwithisrael).
- Student Life is also emailing students consistently to keep them informed about class schedules, provide safety updates, organize Israel advocacy efforts and offer counseling support.



Mornings With Marka October 12, 2023 04:42 [CLIP](#)
Rabbi Ari Berman calls on university presidents to issue 'moral clarity' amid conflict in Israel



Click on the images above to view the respective news segments

To all of our students, thousands of alumni and their families, and the entire nation of Israel, I add my prayers filled with tears and a steadfast belief in our ultimate success.

May Hashem protect us, provide us with the strength to persevere and triumph, and bless our people and our times with peace.

Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman
 President, Yeshiva University



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