

## Israeli Organizations and Advocates for Human Rights of Older Persons

October 30, 2023

Dear colleagues,

### **Re: Need for Action – *Bring Them Home Now* Human Rights of Older Persons & Hamas' War Crimes & Crimes Against Humanity**

With serious concerns we write to you in your capacity as leaders of key national and international organization and bodies in the field of human rights – in general, and in the field of human rights of older persons - specifically.

We, the undersigned, a diverse group of representatives of various older persons' civil society organizations, human rights activists, academics, professionals, and others – all work and act in the field of ageing – appeal for your immediate and **urgent** action.

As human rights activists, services providers, and advocates for the human rights of older persons, we are dismayed by the lack of specific attention to and condemnation of the barbaric and cruel attack that Israeli and foreign citizens suffered in Israel at the hands of Palestinian terror organizations Hamas and the Islamic Jihad during their terror attack against Israel on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

These actions and atrocities fall firmly under the category defined by international law as crimes against humanity, war crimes and could amount to genocide. They included indiscriminate shootings; torture; burning of humans beings alive; massive destruction of homes; rape; beheadings; and kidnapping of 239 individuals of all ages, including babies, children, youth, women, persons with disabilities and older persons. These acts of terror must be condemned by every person and every organization that respects human values and promotes human rights.

Specifically, we would like to focus on the crimes conducted against older Israelis. To the best of our knowledge, more than 100 innocent older persons – some with dementia, some holocaust survivors, many of them vulnerable and dependent – were brutally and inhumanely murdered in their homes. To the best of our knowledge, more than 30 older persons, were abducted, and are now in Gaza and in the hands of Hamas. These numbers are unfortunately not final as every day more bodies are identified, and more information about the crimes of Hamas come to light.

Older persons (or “aged persons”), according to various universal international humanitarian norms (e.g. the Fourth Geneva Convention) enjoy special protection alongside other vulnerable groups (e.g. children or the sick and infirm).

In light of the above, and on behalf of all signatories, we urge you, for the sake of humanity, and for the integrity of your organization, to take urgent action, and to join us in an unequivocal condemnation of the war crimes, crimes against humanity, and violations of the human rights of older persons conducted by the Palestinian terror organizations Hamas and the Islamic Jihad; and in calling publicly for the immediate release of all the hostages, including older hostages held in Gaza by Hamas.

Sincerely,  
<https://www.olderlivesmatter.info>

Prof. Israel Issi Doron & Silvia Perel-Levin;

Marva – Law, Welfare & Empowerment  
Micky Schindler; Michal Wazner; Tamar Feldman Ben-Hanan;

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