

Dear Georgetown friends,

I have read your letter twice and I must confess, I find it difficult to believe what I am seeing. It seems that you are completely detached from the reality of what is happening here at the Technion and maybe in Israel in general. As you sit comfortably in your office, almost 6,000 miles away without the horrors of war, death, and terrorist attacks. Therefore, I must implore you not to criticize us with such baseless accusations.

First, I would like to clarify that there have been no assaults against Arab students here at the Technion. Furthermore, the "PowerPoint presentation" you refer to has no connection to our institution whatsoever, and was not published by us or any of our representatives. In fact, at the time you mention, the ASAT presidency was not even present on campus as both the Vice President and I were on reserve duty due to the ongoing war.

We are not oblivious to the situation at hand, we are fully aware that a part of the Arab students is living in fear. It is only logical that there is tension in the air and hard feelings among Arab students when their 'national' flag is the same as that which was waved by Hamas terrorists during their attacks. These terrorists have been responsible for the murder, rape, and kidnapping of many loved ones within our community. Hence, it is understandable that seeing this flag here is painful and difficult for most of the students here in the Technion.

Contrary to what you may think, the Technion Student Association, along with other student associations across the country, is actively working to eradicate any support for terrorism only. We have no objections to showing support and kindness to the innocent citizens in Gaza, we are not the monsters you seem to believe us to be.

There isn't a single Technion student that faced disciplinary action for expressing feelings of solidarity with the children or citizens of Gaza – not even one.

In order to bridge the rifts that have been created, we are actively creating discourse circles and organizing events that aim to bring everyone together. Although the war has not over yet, we have initiated shared Shabbat meals between Jewish and Arab students as an opportunity for mutual understanding and harmony.

The Arab students are an integral part of the Technion Student Association. They hold positions on the Board, chairmen of faculty committees, office managers, departments coordinators, they serve as representatives in the general assembly and of course work in various departments. We strive to support and include all students, regardless of their religion or nationality.

At last, after I tried my best to dispel your misconceptions and false notions of an "oppression" of Arab students here at the Technion, I would like to extend an invitation to visit us. I invite you to come and see for yourselves, to talk to our students, and to hear directly from them about their experiences during this difficult and terrible time. We would be delighted to show you around the colorful and amazing city of Haifa.

Sincerely,

Itay Israel

President and Chairperson

ASAT - Technion Student Association