



Middle East Studies Association of North America

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Lawrence J. DeNardis, President
The University of New Haven
300 Orange Avenue
West Haven, CT 06516

January 6, 1993

Dear President DeNardis:

The Committee on Academic Freedom of the Middle East Studies Association of North America is relieved to learn that the University of New Haven has postponed the opening of a branch, the HaSharon Campus of the University of New Haven, to be run in conjunction with the Bio-Technical Institute of Tel Aviv, in the West Bank settlement of Elkana.

The Middle East Studies Association comprises 2,300 academics worldwide who teach and conduct research on the Middle East and North Africa. The association publishes the respected International Journal of Middle East Studies and is committed to ensuring respect for the principles of academic freedom and human rights throughout the region.

We note your desire to expand educational opportunities and your intention to welcome qualified students from all demographic and geographic sectors. We hope that you plan to hire a faculty that will reflect the same diversity. However, we are deeply concerned that the proposed HaSharon campus would operate under conditions in which academic freedom and human rights could be violated. We believe that in practice it would be impossible for Palestinian students to attend classes located in a settlement, and for Palestinian faculty to teach in such a location. Further, we believe that starting such a program in a location outside the mandate of Israeli law and under Israeli military control not only legitimizes Israel's occupation of the West Bank but also violates international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Hague Convention of 1907. We are concerned that the proposed opening of the HaSharon Campus will encourage settlement activity and could undermine the peace process.

We respectfully urge you not to open the HaSharon Campus of the University of New Haven outside Israel's 1948 boundaries.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Anne H. Betteridge
Executive Director