

**Statement of the Board of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology on
terror and violence in Israel/Palestine and the polarizing debates in Germany**

As the board of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology, we stand in solidarity with the people in Israel and from all over the world who mourn their relatives and friends brutally murdered by Hamas and who fear for the lives of the kidnapped hostages. We are concerned for all civilian victims in Gaza and the people who have been driven from their homes in the fight for their lives. We stand with all the people of Israel and Palestine who live in daily fear of missiles, bombs and violence and who have lost loved ones.

As social and cultural anthropologists, we are always crossing borders in working with people in their different cultural, religious, social and political contexts. We support all people who are standing up for human rights and international law and condemning all kinds of war crimes. We have found that terror and violence against civilians have never resolved a conflict but have always led to a hardening of hostility.

It is with great concern that we observe an increasing polarization in the public debate in Germany that makes elementary forms of listening and of differentiation more and more difficult. Antisemitism and racism have caused great damage in the history of our discipline and destroyed many lives. We therefore strongly oppose all forms of discrimination and exclusion based on religious, ethnic, linguistic or cultural affiliation or ascription. We feel deep solidarity with all Jewish people increasingly living in fear and having to endure a growing anti-semitism in Germany and all over the world. We are extremely alarmed when social groups in German and European media and political debates are collectively blamed and when islamophobic racism starts raising its head in public discourse. We see migration and plurality as enriching our society and we support the Berlin Declaration - In Defense of the Migration Society.

Social and cultural anthropological research is done in cooperation with others. It requires a constant change of perspective on the part of all participants involved. Our international students and colleagues are increasingly worried as to whether and to what extent a free exchange of ideas and arguments is still possible in German universities and cultural institutions.

We strongly insist on contextualization and differentiation in both academic work and civil society debate. We request the creation of meeting spaces for discussion where plurality and dissent are welcome and in which different points of view and perspectives can and are represented as long as they are carefully reasoned and directed towards mutual understanding.

As members of the board of the German Association of Social and Cultural Anthropology we are committed to a democratic and post-migrant society in Germany, in which people of all affiliations can live, discuss and work together peacefully and without fear.