

Executive Summary

# **Raising Global Awareness**

to

# **Gender Based Violence by Hamas**

during the

# **Oct 7th Massacre**





- **Introduction (4)**
- **Gender Based Violence in Israel on Oct 7th (5)**
- **Gender Based Violence in Armed Conflicts (6)**
- **The Role of Global Institutions (6)**
- **Armed Conflict - A Global Response Study Case (8)**
- **Believe All Women (10)**
- **What Can YOU Do About It? (10)**
- **About Bonot Alternativa (11)**



**I raise up my voice - not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.**

Malala Yousafzai

## Introduction

At 6:30AM on Saturday morning Oct 7th, Hamas infiltrated Israel and raided more than 20 villages, towns and small communities.

In a few hours, hundreds of women and men were attacked: mothers with their babies, infants, young girls and boys, as well as elderly women and men, all faced unimaginable horrors. Innocent civilians were violently tortured, raped, mutilated, burned alive, slaughtered or abducted. Jews, Christians, Muslims, foreign nationals - including migrant workers and foreign students - are all among the victims. Those who managed

to survive are forever scarred by trauma and will never fully heal. 240 Israelis and foreign nationals, including women, children and babies, were brutally abducted and dragged into Gaza. They are now being held hostage by Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, their condition is unknown. Requests by the ICRC to visit them and assess their condition were denied.

To this date, some of the hostages have been released, yet the ICRC still has not been granted access to the rest of the hostages, and their fate remains unknown.

# 84

Women Hostages<sup>(1)</sup>

# 332

Women Murdered<sup>(2)</sup>

# 1500+

Testimonies, including GBV<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) <https://kidnappedfromisrael.n12.co.il/>

(2) <https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/rkobb2xrt>

(3) Commander Shelly Harosh, Gender Based Crimes committed by Hamas on Oct 7, The Committee for Gender Equality, Knesset, 27.11.23

## Gender Based Violence in Israel on Oct 7th

Early Saturday morning, on October 7, testimonies and videos began to surface attesting to the unimaginable scale and brutality of the violence against women, with particular emphasis on varying degrees of sexual violence. The evidence of the magnitude and the brutality emerged as Hamas proudly posted live images and videos of the attack on social media. Some videos depicting horrible violence were even sent to the families of the victims using the victims' own phones.

The vast majority of Oct. 7 female victims who suffered rape and other sexual assaults, including genital mutilations, were murdered, their voice forever silenced.

Given the attack's magnitude and the intricacies involved in assembling testimonies

in sexual violence cases, we began to collect scattered pieces of information that are now being catalogued and fully documented.

The evolving narrative of the severity of Gender Based Violence was pieced together from real-time videos published by Hamas terrorists on social media (which have now been taken off), evidence from crime scenes, eyewitness accounts, forensic data from the field, hospitals, morgues, and Hamas terrorists' confessions during interrogations. Today, The evidence of mass sexual violence is overwhelming and well documented by the Israeli Police. This is by far the most extensive investigation of sexual violence crimes against women and men that the police had ever initiated in the history of our nation.

Experts in sexual trauma predict that it will take many more months and maybe years until all relevant information is collected. Due to the nature of gender-based crimes, victims often bear shame to what has happened to them. Therefore, victims and eyewitnesses tend to take years of processing before they are able to muster the courage needed to share their experiences with others. Most likely as time passes, more testimonies will surface. The survivors, as well as eyewitnesses who are navigating the turbulent waters of secondary trauma, will in time find their voice. And when they do, we will be here to listen, to document, and to amplify their stories.



## Gender Based Violence in Armed Conflicts

Throughout conflicts, sexual violence has been wielded as a weapon of war and psychological subjugation. Beyond the complete and utter degradation of women, sexual violence and rape in war serve a strategic purpose intended to violently attack ethnic and cultural identity by embodying the desire to destroy the entire ethnic community. War Zone Rape underscores a historical and global pattern of oppression and control that reflects deeper societal issues of gender inequality

and discrimination. It reinforces the notion of women as property, and targets them as a way to 'punish' the opposing side. The impact of these crimes is catastrophic, with repercussions that extend far beyond the immediate horror, into the deep, lasting trauma of survivors and the social and psychological fabric of their communities. It is a form of violence that has been internationally recognized as a means of ethnic cleansing and, in extreme cases, as a tool for genocide.



**When women's rights are under attack, we fight back.**

Kamala Harris



## The Role of Global Institutions

The UN has made numerous commitments through various resolutions, including UN Security Council Resolution 1960, 1325, 1888, 2331, Geneva Convention IV; Article 27 and others, to combat sexual violence in conflict and protect women particularly against rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault.

UN agencies are expected to play a proactive and responsive role in safeguarding women's rights, especially in conflict zones, regardless of which side of the conflict the women belong to, by publicly acknowledging the crimes, and expressing solidarity with the victims and the affected country. This step is vital for drawing global attention to the situation and rallying international support.

Yet to our surprise and deepest concerns, UN officials not only didn't publicly condemn the GBV perpetrated against women in Israel, they also have disputed this has even happened<sup>(4)</sup>. In a statement dated Nov 20, UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women and Girls issued a one sided statement about the condition of women and girls in Gaza, while questioning

and contextualizing sexual violence perpetrated against women in Israel<sup>(5)</sup>. Even after presenting our evidence and plea at CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), the global institutions mandated to safeguard all women and global women's organizations have mostly remained silent. Only a few, and just recently, acknowledged the GBV by Hamas in the attack.

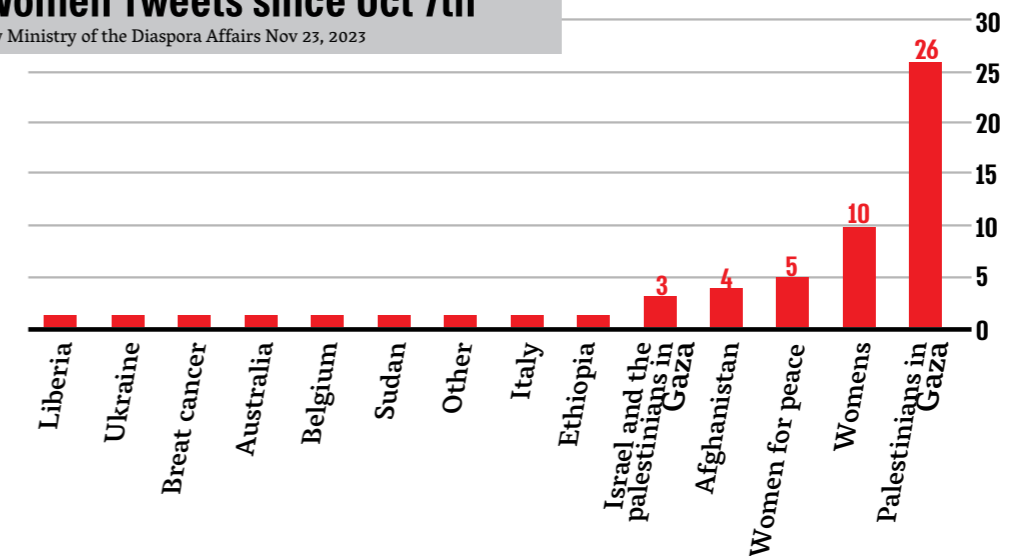
A study of the UN Women twitter statistics show a mere 3 posts mentioning the attack on Israel (along side Gaza) while there were as many as 26 that mention of women in Gaza.\*

This lack of response not only diminishes the experiences of the victims but also raises questions about the efficacy and impartiality of the global mechanisms in place to combat GBV. Moreover, it perpetuates the weaponization of women's and girls' bodies in warfare globally.

(4) Reem Alsalem UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls : <https://x.com/unsrvaw/status/1712076899046859059?s=48&t=3ANA7gd2fmlXp2v9J5TkQ>  
 (5) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/women-bearing-brunt-israel-gaza-conflict-un-expert>

### UN Women Tweets since Oct 7th

\*report by Ministry of the Diaspora Affairs Nov 23, 2023



## Armed Conflict - A Global Response Study Case

### 1992-1995 Sexual Slavery in Former Yugoslavia:

**Context:** Systematic rape and sexual slavery during the Yugoslav wars

**Numbers:** Estimated 20,000-50,000 women were raped.

**Global Reaction:** December 1992 UN Security Council addressed the "massive, organized and systematic detention and rape of women."<sup>(6)</sup>

### 1994 Rapes During Rwandan Civil War:

**Context:** Hutu militias committed mass rapes against Tutsi women.

**Numbers:** 100,000 and 250,000 women were raped in 3 months.<sup>(7)</sup>

**Global Reaction** Since July 1994, the international community has aided Rwandan refugee camps.<sup>(8)</sup>

*1998 The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda made landmark rulings on rape as a weapon of war.*

### 2011 Syria (Syrian Civil War)<sup>(10)</sup>

**Context:** Parties to the conflict resort to sexual violence as a tool to install fear, humiliate, punish and enforce social order

**Numbers:** over 28,000 females have been killed in Syria since March 2011. The sexual violence has been widespread, involving multiple forms of abuse, rape and sexual torture.

**Global Reaction:** well documented since 2011 through various reports and investigations by international organizations like the UN Human Rights Council and NGOs.



### 2014 Nigeria (Boko Haram)<sup>(11)</sup>

**Context:** Boko Haram, an Islamic terrorist group, kidnapped 276 mostly Christian girls, forcing many to convert to Islam and marry its members.

**Numbers:** Amnesty International estimated over 2,000 women and girls were abducted since 2014.

**Global Reaction:** 2014 UN calls for immediate release of abducted school girls in north-eastern Nigeria. International assistance and condemnation followed, efforts include Israel.

*\*\* The hashtag #BringBackOurGirls gained significant traction on social media, with people around the world using it to raise awareness about the abduction and to call for the release of the kidnapped girls. Activists, celebrities, and political figures joined the campaign, among them Michelle Obama, Angelina Jolie and Chris Brown.*

### 2014 Yazidi (ISIS in Iraq)

**Context:** ISIS militants captured Sinjar, northwest Iraq, targeting the Yazidi community.

**Numbers:** An estimated 7,000 Yazidi women and girls fell victim to abduction, rape, and enslavement, with more than 3,000 women still missing.<sup>(12)</sup>

**Global Reaction:** UN Human Right Watch issued statements by 2015.<sup>(13)</sup>

### 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine:

**Context:** Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 led to widespread gender-based violence, including rape, sexual torture, and forced nudity.

**Numbers:** The UN documented 86 cases of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) as of October 2022, but actual numbers are estimated to be much higher.

**Global Reaction:** UN documented crimes in 2022, UNWomen released a paper in June 2023.<sup>(14)</sup>

(6) <https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/pdf/bgsexualviolence.pdf>

<https://www.icty.org/en/features/crimes-sexual-violence/landmark-cases>

(7) <https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/pdf/bgsexualviolence.pdf>

(8) <https://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Rwanda.htm>

(9) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape\\_during\\_the\\_Rwandan\\_genocide#cite\\_note-FOOTNOTEMerry2008166-29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rape_during_the_Rwandan_genocide#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMerry2008166-29)

(10) <https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/i-lost-my-dignity-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-syrian-arab-republic>

<https://euaa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/publications/easo-coi-report-syria-situation-women.pdf>

(11) <https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/04/466312-un-calls-immediate-release-abducted-school-girls-north-eastern-nigeria>

<https://embassies.gov.il/UnGeneva/NewsAndEvents/Pages/PM-Netanyahu-offers-assistance-to-Nigeria-11-May-2014.aspx>

(12) <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/14/yazidi-women-survivors-of-isis-crimes-have-yet-to-find-justice>

[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s.\\_2015\\_.203.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s._2015_.203.pdf)

(13) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/04/14/un-sexual-violence-tactic-war>

(14) <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/Rapid-Gender-Analysis-of-Ukraine-en.pdf>



# Believe All Women

Sexual violence is an underreported crime led by victims' fear of disbelief. This is why feminists have sworn to believe all women. This is also based on the understanding that women are systematically discriminated, marginalised and objectified in a way that fertilizes ground for violence against women. Women in Israel are now subjected to the same denial mechanism that single rape victims are subjected to, that questions and shames their experiences. This denial, that the feminist movement has sworn to dismantle, is now ironically inflicted on women in Israel collectively. There is no geopolitical context that can justify rape.

**Women are women, rape is rape.**

We must battle all manifestations, regardless of political agendas. Silence at this moment is not just a betrayal of women in Israel; it is a betrayal of everything feminism stands for and sets a dangerous precedent of tolerance to such violence that will backlash at the entire feminist community.

## What can YOU do about it?

The fight against Gender Based Violence requires a united, global effort. It demands a shift in perspective – from viewing GBV as an isolated issue to recognizing it as a pervasive violation of human rights that affects us all.

The grim reality, informed by past experiences, suggests these hostages may be enduring unspeakable sexual violence in captivity. To stand idly by is not an option; **Be the voice of the voiceless** - speak up for all women and share their stories.

Voice your refusal to let these atrocities go unchallenged.

Contact your elected representatives, demand their engagement and influence in international forums to prioritize the safe return and welfare of remaining hostages. Show your unwavering commitment to the dignity, rights, and freedom of all women.

## Be a WomenBeing



I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.

Audre Lorde

## About us

### Bonot Alternativa | בונות אלטרנטיבה

(Hebrew for: building an alternative)

Established in 2020 by **Moran Zen Katzenstein**, "Bonot" has been at the forefront of advocating for the rights and welfare of women in Israel, especially in the challenging context that Israel faced in the past 10 months in light of legislative overreach. Within weeks **Bonot Alternativa** created a robust network of over 100,000 volunteers across 80 locations nationwide and worldwide spearheading monumental protests in Israel that resonated globally and garnered international attention and support.

In light of the brutal attack by Hamas on Oct 7th and as more and more evidence of brutal crimes against women emerged, our immediate focus shifted to bring forth recognition and condemnation of the massive gender based crimes against humanity perpetrated against women and children in Israel.

**Our objective is clear:** to remind various UN bodies, international organizations, diplomats, gender studies experts, and women's organizations across the world of their obligation to fight all forms of violence against women, regardless of geopolitical context. Our aim is (1) to secure recognition of the crimes committed by Hamas against women and girls, specifically those of a sexual nature, (2) to achieve public condemnation of these crimes, and (3) to initiate definitive measures of support and aid to the to civil society. This includes upholding global standards and best practices, with the top priority being the safe return of all remaining hostages abducted by Hamas and taken to Gaza.

**contact:** [office@bonot.org](mailto:office@bonot.org)

 [bonotalternativa](https://www.instagram.com/bonotalternativa)





## From The Media:

### The Times

#### First Hamas fighters raped her. Then they shot her in the head

#### Mounting evidence of widespread rape on October 7

Mounting evidence of widespread rape on October 7

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/78d415db-37e9-4845-82b3-a1c96094ce79?shareToken=4eb39ad8314d1f875bed6b497e1e433>



### La Parisian

#### "They stopped when they thought I was dead": Esther, raped and mutilated by Hamas terrorist

<https://www.leparisien.fr/international/israel/israel-le-calvaire-desther-violee-et-mutilee-par-les-terroristes-du-hamas-26-11-2023-MK5HBAQRZHENBBFEFOI6NDVWI.php>



### CNN

#### Israel investigates claims of sexual violence on October 7

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2023/11/16/the-lead-israel-investigates-sexual-violence-claims-on-october-7-jake-tapper.cnn>



### The Washington Post

#### Israel investigates an elusive, horrific enemy: Rape as a weapon of war

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2023/11/12/hamas-planning-terror-gaza-israel/?hpid=hp-top-news-story%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&hpid=hp-top-news-story%3Ahomepage%2Fstory>



### France 24

#### Israeli police launch Oct 7th probe into Hamas sexual violence following 'pressure of civil society

<https://www.france24.com/en/video/20231116-israeli-police-launch-oct-7th-probe-into-hamas-sexual-violence-following-pressure-of-civil-society>

### New York Post

#### Response to Hamas horror shows the feminist movement has lost its moral compass

<https://nypost.com/2023/10/18/response-to-hamas-horror-shows-the-feminist-movement-has-lost-its-moral-compass/>



### DW News

#### Reports of sexual violence perpetrated by Hamas on and after October 7th

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zhggptQaMI>



### The Times of Israel

#### Kill, behead, rape: Interrogated Hamas members detail atrocities against civilians

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/kill-behead-rape-interrogated-hamas-members-detail-atrocities-against-civilians/>



### The Sun

#### Where Are the International Women's Organizations as the Shocking Scale of Hamas's Sexual Violence Against Israeli Women on October 7 Becomes Horrifyingly Clear?

<https://www.nysun.com/article/as-investigations-unfold-the-shocking-scale-of-hamas-sexual-violence-against-israeli-women-on-october-7-becomes-painfully-clear>



### Tablet

#### Israeli police launch Oct 7th probe into Hamas sexual violence following 'pressure of civil society

<https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/israel-middle-east/articles/israel-music-festival-massacre-eyewitness-account>

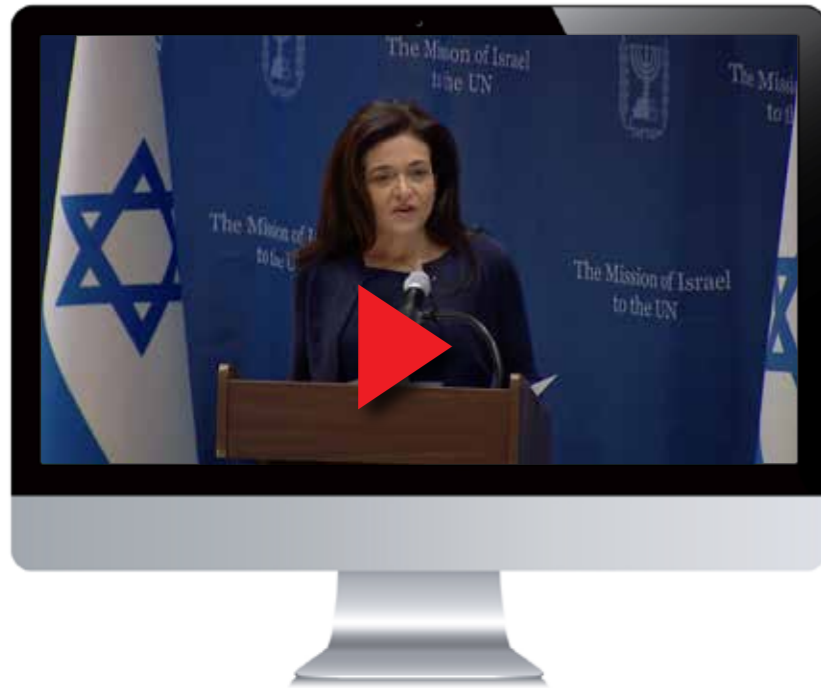




Hear Our Voices:

Sexual and gender-based violence in the October 7th Hamas terror attack

<https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1u/k1u8mfvmcm>



Timestamps:

- 03:20 Ambassador Gilad Erdan
- 10:00 Sheila Katz head of NJSW
- 14:15 Sheryl Sandberg
- 21:36 Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
- 31:05 Hillary Clinton
- 34:53 Testimonies of Hamas terrorists
- 36:40 Police Chief Superintendent Yael Reichert - testimonies from official investigation, including eyewitness video
- 45:33 Testimony of Sheri Mendes, Morgue reservist
- 54:40 Testimony of first responder Simcha Greneeman
- 01:02:00 Linor Abargil former Miss World, rape survivor
- 01:07:04 Prof Ifat Bitton, Law professor
- 01:13:37 Mandana Diani, Jewish Iranian, Women rights advocate

Rape is NOT Resistance  
Being the Voice to the Voiceless around the world



NYC, UN HQ



Vancouver Canada



Bayron Bay Australia



Tel Aviv Israel





**Standing with  
Sexual Violence  
victims is not political.  
Silence is.**



**bonot.org**