

HRDD Phase 2 Partner Assessment Report: Israel/Palestine

Submitted to the Executive Board by the Human Rights Advisory Committee (HRAC)

Section 1. Introduction

The HRAC phase 1 HRDD report on Israel/Palestine concluded that there are serious indications that Israel has committed and continues to commit international crimes and serious human rights violations, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and potential acts of genocide. This phase 2 report sets out our assessment of Maastricht University's (UM's) institutional strategic partnership in Israel/Palestine (with Hebrew University of Jerusalem) and provides recommendations on this partner to the Executive Board. Section 3 describes considerations regarding Ministries, State Organs, and the Status of Public Universities in Israel. The Committee notes that UM currently does not have any strategic partnerships with any Palestinian institutions. For this reason, the report includes assessment only of our Israeli partner.¹

Section 2. Partnership with Hebrew University of Jerusalem

1. General introduction

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem is a large university: 23,500 students (from 66 countries); 6000 academic and administrative staff;² roughly similar in size to Maastricht University. It ranks nr. 281 in the QS world University Rankings 2025 (Maastricht University ranks nr. 230).³

HUJI's "international involvement" is listed on its website: "[HUJI] has signed 150 agreements for joint projects with other universities and 25 agreements for student exchanges with 14 countries."⁴ Maastricht University is no longer identified as an exchange destination,⁵ and otherwise only identified as a partner in an ERASMUS+ project within ASPHER that ended in 2024.⁶

¹ The Human Rights Advisory Committee initially included two other partners for analysis (Rabin Medical Centre and Enspire), but after further examination concluded that these were not institutional strategic partnerships. Accordingly, our report does not provide analysis of these two institutions. Researchers considering collaboration with colleagues from these (or other Israel-based) institutions may approach the committee for guidance.

² <https://en.huji.ac.il/university-numbers>, accessed 16 June 2025.

³ <https://www.topuniversities.com/world-university-rankings?countries=il>, accessed 16 June 2025.

⁴ See footnote 2.

⁵ [Current list, archived version of Dec. 26, 2024.](#)

⁶ [HUJI description](#) of the "Sharing European Educational Experience in Public Health for Israel" (SEEPHI), accessed Sep. 10, 2025. [Project overview at ASPHER](#), accessed Sep. 10, 2025.

2. Partnership under consideration

In 2017, UM and HUJI, specifically the UM Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience (FPN) and the HUJI Department of Psychology, engaged in a student exchange agreement, establishing an exchange program for students, with the aim of allowing students of both universities to “gain international experience, enhance academic and research opportunities, and promote greater cultural understanding”.⁷ The agreement is open to two students per year (if each stay one semester), and explicitly excludes any financial transaction between the two institutions.⁸

The agreement was initially for 5 years with the possibility of extension. The exchange program remained active until it was frozen by UM in spring 2024.

3. Potentially problematic aspects, in terms of serious human rights violations, and/or international crimes.

In our analysis of the HUJI we found a number of potentially problematic practices at the university related to serious human rights violations, and/or international crimes.

Relation to the Israeli military (IDF)

The university has active connections with the IDF. As concluded in our phase 1 report, the IDF is actively involved in serious human rights violations and international crimes, including potential acts of genocide.⁹ Therefore, these connections are problematic. We have found multiple instances of direct support provided to IDF by HUJI.

First, HUJI has set up a support program for students who are active IDF reservists. Reservist military service is mandatory for many Israeli citizens after completion of mandatory military service, and as reservist they can be, and are, called upon to serve in active reservist duty. However, it is possible to refuse to serve, which many thousands (estimates fluctuate between 15,000 – 100,000) are currently doing. Refusing active reserve duty usually has no consequences or, in rare cases, means one has to spend a short period in prison.¹⁰ Through the support program at HUJI, reservists can receive

⁷ 2017 Student Exchange Agreement between UM and HUJI, p. 1.

⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

⁹ See HRAC report phase 1 on Israel/Palestine.

¹⁰ Staff, T. (2025) “Army reservist reportedly jailed for refusing to serve in West Bank, Gaza”, *The Times of Israel*, 12 May 2025. Available at: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/army-reservist-reportedly-jailed-for-refusing-to-serve-in-west-bank-gaza/>, accessed 27 June 2025; Harel, A. (2024) “Refusal to serve in the Israel Defense Forces reserves in an era of anti-democratic judicial reform”, *Critical Military Studies* 10(4): 562-567; Rapoport, M. (2025) “The Israeli army is facing its biggest refusal crisis in decades”, *+972 Magazine* April 11, 2025. Available at: <https://www.972mag.com/israeli-army-refusal-crisis-gaza-war/>, accessed 27 June 2025; Margalit, R. (2025) “The Israeli Soldiers who refuse to fight in Gaza”, *The New Yorker* May 14, 2025. Available at: <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-lede/the-israeli-soldiers-who-refuse-to-fight-in-gaza>, accessed 27 June 2025.

financial support, credit reduction and passing grades, as well as other types of measures making it easier for these students to pass their studies (e.g. extra time for exams, easing mandatory attendance requirements). These include special measures for injured reservists.¹¹

We recognize the need to support injured students (no matter the cause of their injury), in line with their human rights. However, the provision of credit reduction and financial support go above and beyond the duty of care, towards pro-active support of students engaging in military action. It is extraordinary that students are able to skip meeting program-level ILOs solely through participation in active military service with no limitation indicated on the kinds of courses being passed without assessment. This provides a concrete reward to students who join the IDF and engage in military actions, including those actions in violation of international law (see phase 1 report). These rewards are not available to students engaged in any other form of extra-curricular activity, or undergoing other special circumstances. Relatedly, HUJI does not provide institutional support to those refusing to serve in the IDF.

Second, various military education programs for the IDF are taught at HUJI, including the Havatzalot program which educates IDF military intelligence officers, and for which “the officers in training will wear their uniforms on campus and have separate living quarters monitored by security cameras and that can only be entered with a biometric pass”,¹² and the Talpiot program which teaches military technological expertise.¹³

Third, the HUJI indicates that they “provide diverse logistics equipment to several military units” - this is presented by the university as a positive contribution to the military effort.¹⁴

According to the “Australian friends of the Hebrew University” (an association that raises funding and awareness for HUJI), “The Hebrew University is not only Israel’s first and foremost university but it is also the university that has the most important ties and

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<https://new.huji.ac.il/news/%D7%94%D7%A7%D7%9C%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%95%D7%94%D7%AA%D7%90%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%AA-%D7%90%D7%A7%D7%93%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA>, accessed 16 June 2025.

¹² <https://www.jta.org/quick-reads/hebrew-universitys-new-army-intelligence-program-not-welcomed-by-all>, accessed 18 June 2025.

¹³ We are much indebted to our colleagues at Radboud University Nijmegen for their analysis on this point. See Buydens, L, Leijenhorst, C., Bovend’Eert, P & Kole, J. (2025) “Advies aangaande de samenwerking met Hebrew University of Jerusalem International”, p.8. Additional sources: <https://austfhu.org.au/hebrew-university-partners-with-idf-to-offer-prestigious-academic-military-program-for-intelligence-corps-officers/>, accessed 18 June 2025; <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2019-04-14/ty-article/.premium/hebrew-university-to-host-israeli-army-base-on-campus/0000017f-dbe6-d856-a37f-ffe6bf330000>, accessed 18 June 2025; <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/jerusalem-hebrew-university-to-host-military-intelligence-program-586822>, accessed 18 June 2025.

¹⁴ <https://campaign.huji.ac.il/help-university-community>, accessed 23 June 2025; Report on Israeli-Dutch academic ties, p. 8.

collaboration with the Israel Defence Force [hereafter: IDF]”. They share a list of ties between HUJI and the IDF.¹⁵

Relation to the illegal occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem

We are also concerned regarding how the HUJI relates to the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine (the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem),¹⁶ particularly because the HUJI website publicly advertises their ongoing archaeological research in the West Bank.¹⁷ A [press release](#) and [YouTube video](#) clearly identify the location of archaeological work at the Fortress of Hyrcania located within the West Bank.¹⁸ Israel, as a signatory of the 1954 Hague Convention, is required by art. 5 to “support the competent national authorities of the occupied territory in safeguarding and preserving [their] cultural property.” This project concerns a collaboration between HUJI, Carson-Newman University, and American Veterans Archeological Recovery, and we have not seen any indication that Palestinian authorities were consulted and/or have approved this project.¹⁹

In addition, we note that there has been a debate regarding the location of the HUJI Mount Scopus campus, and whether or not this is located outside the 1967 green line, in Palestine.²⁰ However, we find that the evidence is inconclusive and are not in a position to make a judgment on this matter based on the evidence available.

Repression of voices critical of serious human rights violations, international crimes and potential genocide

We are aware of one case where a law professor, Prof. Shalhoub-Kevorkian, was called on by the rector of HUJI “to resign in late 2023 after she signed a letter calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and describing Israel’s campaign as genocide, and she was briefly suspended over the podcast cited in her interrogation”.²¹ This case raised concerns about academic freedom at HUJI (a possible human rights violation). However, this

¹⁵ <https://austfhu.org.au/when-duty-calls-the-hebrew-university-is-always-there/>, accessed 18 June 2025.

¹⁶ REF ICJ / see also phase 1 report.

¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gz8ybgXQSwQ&t=1s> , accessed 25 May 2025.

¹⁸ Geolocation notes available on request.

¹⁹ In general, issues numerous issues surrounding Israel archeological projects in the West Bank have been well documented. Maastricht University should be wary of such issues when assessing any Israeli academic partner involved in archeological projects. See: <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/10/03/israeli-archaeology-bill-raises-fears-of-west-bank-annexation>, accessed 22 June 2025; <https://emekshaveh.org/en/about-us/>, accessed 22 June 2025; Report on Israeli-Dutch academic ties, p. 37

²⁰ Reference to reports Nijmegen and Amsterdam?

²¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/26/political-arrest-palestinian-academic-nadera-shalhoub-kevorkian-israel-civil-liberties-threat>, accessed 27 June 2025; <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/report/2023-10-29-hebrew-university-of-jerusalem/>, accessed 27 June 2025; Report on Israeli-Dutch academic ties, p. 8.

situation led to protests,²² it appears to be an isolated incident, and we found no indications of any other such incidents.²³

Presentation of a one-sided narrative that supports the Israeli government's international crimes

Since there is ample evidence on the important role played by narrative in relation to (armed) conflict and other forms of human rights violations,²⁴ and because universities are authoritative actors in society that contribute to the creation of narratives, we find it relevant to consider the role the partner plays in this respect.

HUJI has not taken any official position in relation to the war. There has been no statement either condemning or supporting the Israeli government's international crimes as detailed in the phase 1 report, nor supporting them. Very recently the presidents of 5 Israeli universities did publish an open letter to president Netanyahu, condemning the immorality of "the cruel and indiscriminate harm being done by Israel to non-combatant men, women, and children", ministers and members of the Knesset advocating for the intentional destruction of Gaza and the forced displacement of its civilian population".²⁵ However, this letter was not published on the HUJI website. One could argue that it is important that the university remains neutral on topics that are so controversial in Israeli society, so that all students who hold different political views feel welcome. However, we find that the university in its public communication actually presents a one-sided narrative that supports the pro-war rhetoric of the Israeli government. For example:

- On the HUJI website homepage, there is a countdown for how long the hostages have been kidnapped by Hamas, but not the duration of the war, or how long Gazans have been without aid, or how many civilians have died in Gaza (to give some examples). There is a call to remember members of the Israeli military who died in Gaza, but no other victims of the war are mentioned.²⁶

²² <https://www.academia4equality.com/en/post/call-for-the-immediate-release-of-prof-nadera-shalhoub-kevorkian-and-the-termination-of-the-investi> accessed 25 June 2025.

²³ She is back to work at HUJI: <https://en.law.huji.ac.il/people/nadera-shaloub-kevorkian>, accessed 25 June 2025.

²⁴ See for example Cobb, S. (2013) *Speaking of Violence: The Politics and Poetics of Narrative and Conflict Resolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Kvernbeek, T., & Bøe-Hansen, O. (2017). How to win wars: The role of the war narrative. In *Narration as argument* (pp. 215-234). Cham: Springer International Publishing;

²⁵ <https://english.tau.ac.il/presidents-letter-on-famine-in-gaza>, accessed 3 August 2025.

²⁶ <https://en.huji.ac.il/>.

- Official communications by the university board stress the need to bring back hostages (“there is no greater priority!”), but don’t mention any other international crimes^{27 28}

As explained above, HUJI takes elaborate measures to support Israeli reservist military, yet no such measures exist (for example) for Israelis who refuse to enlist as eservists and therefore spend days in jail, or for Palestinian (“Arab”) students who have family members in Gaza and are severely psychologically affected by witnessing their family members fighting starvation or fleeing from bombs.

Therefore, instead of being neutral, the institutional position and narrative presented by HUJI is a one-sided narrative that supports the international crimes being committed by the Israeli government, by stressing the victimhood of Israelis while ignoring the suffering of Palestinians.

4. Potentially positive aspects, in relation to the ongoing serious human rights violations, war crimes and international crimes.

In our analysis of HUJI, we found a number of potentially positive practices at the university related to serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes.

Our research gives the impression that, apart from the incident with Prof. Shalhoub-Kevorkian mentioned above, academic freedom is quite well protected at HUJI, including in relation to the currently ongoing serious human rights violations and international crimes. HUJI researchers express views and academic content in public, including in the media, from various perspectives. This includes HUJI scholars arguing in international media that “what is happening in Gaza does not need to resemble the Holocaust to qualify as genocide”,²⁹ calls for peace,³⁰ and an opinion piece by Prof. David Enoch, addressing

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<https://new.huji.ac.il/news/%D7%94%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%98%D7%94-%D7%94%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%AA-%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%AA-%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%9E%D7%A9%D7%9C%D7%AA-%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C-%D7%A2%D7%A1%D7%A7%D7%94-%D7%A2%D7%9B%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%95>

²⁸<https://new.huji.ac.il/news/%D7%94%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%A1%D7%99%D7%98%D7%94-%D7%94%D7%A2%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%AA-%D7%A7%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%AA-%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%9E%D7%A9%D7%9C%D7%AA-%D7%99%D7%A9%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%9C-%D7%A2%D7%A1%D7%A7%D7%94-%D7%A2%D7%9B%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%95>,
<https://new.huji.ac.il/news/%D7%A2%D7%93%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%A0%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%A9%D7%95%D7%98%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%A2%D6%B8%D7%9D-%D7%9B%D6%BC%D6%B0%D7%9C%D6%B8%D7%91%D6%B4%D7%99%D7%90>,
<https://new.huji.ac.il/%D7%9E%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%95%D7%94-%D7%9E%D7%A6%D7%91-%D7%97%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%9D> , all accessed 3 August 2025.

²⁹ <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-undoubtedly-committing-genocide-holocaust-scholar-amos-goldberg> , accessed 27 June 2025.

³⁰ <https://archive.is/P1tKv#selection-295.10-297.102>), accessed 27 June 2025.

those who believe that it cannot true be that the IDF is engaged in war crimes.³¹ At the leadership level, we note that the HUJI rector expressed criticism of Israeli government cuts of funding for municipalities populated by Palestinians in Israel,³² a statement by the heads of Israeli universities including HUJI, stating that “we too mourn the loss of innocent life in this horrific conflict and want a better future for Palestinians and Israelis both”,³³ and the recent letter signed by the president, as mentioned above.

While we note with concern some signals that student protests do not seem to be allowed, and that the police intervenes in peaceful protests,³⁴ other sources indicate that various types of protest, with various political goals, are generally allowed by HUJI.³⁵ We particularly note the refusal of HUJI to comply with an order to share the personal details of all students of the sciences faculty, after one student allegedly damaged a water canon of the policy during a protest.³⁶

³¹ Enoch, D. (2024) „דמיינו איך תיראה פקודה לפשע מלחמה. עכשיו קראו את הפקודות שלפניכם”, *Haaretz* 27 October 2024. Also published on the unofficial HIJU law blog: <https://www.hujiawblog.com/single-post/%D7%90%D7%99%D7%9C%D7%95-%D7%91%D7%90%D7%9E%D7%AA-%D7%94%D7%99%D7%95-%D7%90%D7%9C%D7%94-%D7%A4%D7%A9%D7%A2%D7%99-%D7%9E%D7%9C%D7%97%D7%9E%D7%94-%D7%97%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%90%D7%99%D7%9A-%D7%94%D7%99%D7%99%D7%AA%D7%9D-%D7%99%D7%95%D7%93%D7%A2%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%A2%D7%9C-%D7%96%D7%94>, accessed 27 June 2025.

³² <https://amp-cnn-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/amp.cnn.com/cnn/videos/world/2023/08/09/exp-080911aseg01-cnni-world-hebrew-univ-rector-israel-cuts-funding.cnn>, accessed 27 June 2025.

³³ https://international.huji.ac.il/israeli_university_heads_on_CRUE_statement, accessed 27 June 2025.

³⁴ https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/hebrew-u-student-protest-calls-for-end-of-war-in-gaza-stop-the-genocide/, accessed 27 June 2025; <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-04-08/ty-article/.premium/hebrew-university-students-protest-gaza-war-despite-schools-attempt-to-cancel-rally/00000196-15d0-d23b-aff6-5fd05d8b0000>, accessed 27 June 2025; <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israeli-palestinian-students-protest-at-hebrew-university-to-demand-end-to-gaza-war/3531797>, accessed 13 October 2025.

³⁵ <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/israel-at-war/artc-tensions-erupt-at-hebrew-university-as-students-clash-over-gaza>, accessed 8 October 2025; <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/pro-palestinian-students-protest-gaza-war-at-hebrew-university-in-jerusalem/3233075>, accessed 8 October 2025; <https://www.srugim.co.il/1125012-%d7%90%d7%97%d7%a8%d7%99-%d7%a1%d7%a2%d7%a8%d7%aa-%d7%94%d7%a0%d7%9b%d7%91%d7%94-%d7%9e%d7%97%d7%90%d7%94-%d7%a1%d7%95%d7%a2%d7%a8%d7%aa-%d7%91%d7%90%d7%95%d7%a0%d7%99%d7%91%d7%a8%d7%a1%d7%99>, accessed 13 October 2025.

³⁶ <https://www.haaretz.co.il/news/law/2025-04-24/ty-article/.premium/00000196-6636-daf5-a99f-f73ebaf40000>, accessed 8 October 2025; <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2025-04-25/ty-article/.premium/university-ordered-to-hand-over-student-info-as-police-search-for-anti-govt-protester/00000196-6958-d4b3-a9df-7dfe79810000>, accessed 8 October 2025.

5. The HUJI psychology department

The UM partnership agreement is specifically with the psychology department of HUJI, a non-autonomous department. This department has a very strong academic track record. There are long standing and multiple connections with Dutch psychology.

At the department level, there is relatively little information available. On the website of the department, no problematic content related to the violations being studied was identified – in fact, there was no political content at all related to the war, occupation or international crimes. When looking at the faculty’s website and social media, it is as if there is no war . The only mentions, in the “research in the headlines” section highlight the victimhood of the Israeli people.³⁷

The department does not operate any military programs. Studies in psychology are not part of the “Reservist tracks” educating students for the academic reserve. Contact with the department and consultations at UM give the impression that a number of department staff are engaged in protesting the war and in pro-human rights / peacebuilding research.³⁸ However, these activities are not part of the official policy of HUJI and are for example not advertised on its websites or social media channels, including the department website and channels.

6. Advice for the Executive Board

Based on the preceding considerations, the Committee concludes the following regarding HUJI.³⁹

HUJI is currently indirectly involved in serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes being committed by the Israeli government. As an institution, they are indirectly involved in such actions because of their involvement with the IDF, because of their archeological project in the West Bank, and the presentation of a one-sided narrative that supports the international crimes being committed by the Israeli government. While we acknowledge some positive actions undertaken by the university to protect human rights, as well as the fact that they are currently operating under very challenging

³⁷ Namely: on collective trauma since October 7th; anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder since October 7th; how the Israeli society deals with bereavement and grief following the war. https://psychology.huji.ac.il/news/in_the_press, accessed 27 June 2025.

³⁸ E.g. The research of the chair of the department: <https://www.eranhalperin.com/>, and a podcast on how to stop groups from hating each other https://open.spotify.com/episode/3OFvl80JfmHLs2KelwSpmu?si=d7c976184adb4acc&fbclid=IwY2xjawLLvXBleHRuA2FlbQlxMABicmlkETFIZ0dSMGhNRURmY2RxWmRIAR7hJWPJjv_O7oZ2O0VwBm5NaDsl199r8cdG5qeyXrRo-NxzRhFzWP3-WlpKJA_aem_hKvjOhtMBJeAzFgsfx8oBg&nd=1&dlsi=90e3f0acd5a24a15 , accessed 27 June 2025.

³⁹ In our deliberations the Committee adhered to section 4.2.4 of our Working Principles, on ensuring impartiality.

circumstances, we still feel that the (support for) human rights violations as detailed above cross a line so serious that Maastricht University should not want to have any strategic partnerships with the HUJI (as an institution). Therefore, we **recommend that the current strategic institutional partnership should be suspended and no new partnerships should begin, until certain conditions are met.**

This means that all activities included in the partnership with HUJI should end fully, until certain conditions are met. The main reason for this recommendation is that the symbolism of a total block, in face of the serious human rights violations and international crimes being committed by the Israeli government (see report phase 1) and the involvement of HUJI in these crimes (report phase 2), sends the strongest message regarding the unacceptability of such crimes.

An additional element in the Executive Board's decision could be to stop outgoing students going to HUJI, while continuing to open our doors to *incoming students* as part of this student exchange. The main argument in favor of this position is twofold: First, this would make it possible for HUJI students to be exposed to alternative narratives and education at UM and in the Netherlands, compared to what they learn at HUJI and in the context of (current) life in Israel. Second, and more importantly, there would be positive symbolic value in keeping our doors open to HUJI students, to signal that all students are welcome and that we do not hold them responsible for the crimes of their government and/or university. This would be in line with the UM values of global citizenship, inclusion, and the UM ambition to be an "open and accessible community where all cultures, perspectives and ideas come together", that "welcome[s] talented people from all over the world".⁴⁰

We therefore advise taking the following concrete steps:

1. Inform HUJI that the partnership is suspended and share the HRAC reports (for phases 1 and 2) with HUJI leadership.
2. Inform HUJI that UM would consider restarting the partnership if it:
 - a. Ends all archeological projects in the West Bank.
 - b. Ends all collaboration with the Israeli military (IDF), for as long as the IDF is committing international crimes or serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or
 - c. Ends the special treatment of reserve soldiers who are also students by providing them with financial support and credit reduction, as long as the IDF is committing serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes.
 - d. Publicly distances itself from the crimes being committed by the Israeli government in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.
3. Make the phase 1 and 2 reports public so that all UM staff and students considering collaboration with HUJI are properly informed.

⁴⁰ UM strategic programme 2022-2026, p. 25.

This advice can be reconsidered:

1. upon request by the University Board or Faculty leadership (there is a proponent);
2. in pursuit of a future strategic agreement (there is a concrete goal);
3. if the situation in Israel/Palestine has fundamentally improved or there is concrete evidence that HUJI has taken steps aligned with our expectations (concrete change in the situation).

Section 3. Legal and Institutional Considerations for HRDD Phase II Assessments in Israel-Palestine: Ministries, State Organs, and the Status of Public Universities

Given the phase 1 report findings, in the current context, the Committee advises against entering into or continuing partnerships with any organs of the Israeli State. While under domestic law, ministries and other public bodies are often constituted as separate legal persons, with their own rights and obligations, international law treats the State as a single legal entity.⁴¹ For the purpose of assessing institutional cooperation, the State is understood organically: its ministries, agencies, and public authorities are not isolated actors but constituent organs of one unified subject of international law. Accordingly, cooperation with a ministry—such as the Ministry of Health—cannot be meaningfully distinguished from cooperation with the State itself. Given the serious and well-documented violations currently attributed to the State of Israel, any such engagement would raise significant concerns under the HRDD Framework.

This analysis does not automatically extend to Israeli public universities, which—although publicly funded—generally operate with legal and administrative autonomy and are not considered organs of the State under international law. However, this status depends on context. Where a university acts under the direction or control of the State or participates in activities aligned with State policy—such as military collaborations or discriminatory practices—it may, in specific cases, be understood as contributing to the State’s conduct or objectives.

⁴¹ International Law Commission. (2001). *Draft articles on responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts*, Art. 4. UN Doc. A/56/49(Vol. I)/Corr.4; see also International Law Commission. (2001). *Draft articles on responsibility of States for internationally wrongful acts, with commentaries*, p. 35, para. 6. UN Doc. A/56/10.

Appendix 1: Recommendations regarding the Blocklist and the Brightlist

The Human Rights Advisory Committee recommends that after the initial pilot phase of the Human Rights Due Diligence process, the Executive Board consider creating and formally publishing on the UM website two lists: a “**blocklist**” of partner institutions with whom we do not want to be associated because of their involvement in serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes; and a “**brightlist**” of partner institutions with whom we are proud to be in a partnership, because of their positive action against serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes, in countries where such violations occur.

(a) The Blocklist

The goal of the blocklist is to: a) motivate partner institutes to change their behaviour insofar as they are involved in international crimes; b) send a strong signal regarding the minimum expectations UM holds towards partner institutions (i.e. not to be involved in international crimes); c) provide information for individuals at UM considering partnership with these partners.

For institutions on the blocklist, this means that UM does not engage in any strategic partnerships with such institutions, unless they cease all involvement in serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes.

In cases where the partner institution is involved in serious human rights violations, war crimes and/or international crimes, so that they are on the blocklist, yet (some of) the activities resulting from the partnership contribute positively to the realisation of human rights, these activities could be exempted from the overall block of shared activities.

(b) The Brightlist

The goal of the brightlist is to: a) motivate and support partner institutes to take a positive and constructive role in the realisation of human rights, in particular in situations where this is challenging because of local circumstances that entail serious human rights violations and/or international crimes; b) encourage individuals and leaders at UM to engage in partnerships with such institutions.

For institutions on the brightlist, this means that UM commits to actively supporting and upholding these partnerships, for example by showcasing positive outcomes of such partnerships, and/or providing financial support to initiatives with these partners. As mentioned in the HRDD framework, the consequences of strategic partners being listed either on the block- or brightlist does not apply to individual collaborations or non-strategic partnerships.

Appendix 2: Recommendation regarding university communication

The Human Rights Advisory Committee also recommends that the Executive Board creates a policy setting out how the university communicates in terms of new developments internationally regarding serious human rights violations, war crimes or international crimes. In our view, such a policy should include outreach to UM community members with personal and/or professional ties to countries or peoples involved.