

The University of Haifa—the Spokesman Office

## The University of Haifa Response to the AUT Decision

The University of Haifa is saddened and not a little outraged by the utterly unjust and unjustifiable decision of the AUT and by its attempt to erect barriers and obstruct the flow of ideas within the international academic community.

In lieu of evidence to support the singling out of Israeli academia, the authors of this campaign have chosen to adopt a three-year old urban legend. We are astounded by the fact that the AUT never requested our response prior to adopting their resolution, and did not allow our position to be presented by members of the AUT who are familiar with the facts. The case against Israeli academia, in general, and the University of Haifa in particular, is devoid of empirical evidence and violates the principle of due process. Driven by a prior and prejudicial assumption of guilt, the AUT has refused to confuse itself with facts.

In actual fact, during the past few years, Dr. Pappe has transgressed all common ethical standards of academic life. Yet, despite his conduct, the University of Haifa has demonstrated extraordinary tolerance. One of his colleagues did indeed lodge a complaint with the internal faculty disciplinary committee. The complaint focused on Dr. Pappe's unethical behavior towards his peers and his efforts to disbar them from international forums for daring to contradict his views. **Contrary to Dr. Pappe's claim, the university made no attempt to expel him.**

As to the now too famous thesis that provoked this altercation, an independent committee was asked to examine the validity of the quotes that were used as the "scientific basis" for the highly controversial charges proffered in this thesis, authored by Mr. Teddy Katz. After a thorough examination, the committee members concluded that, in fact, the quotes in the written text did not match the taped comments of the interviews and that the text was grossly distorted. Therefore, they disqualified this MA thesis. This decision, it is important to note, matched a court decision given on the same matter. As Dr. Pappe did not like the committee decision, despite the undeniable discrepancies between the text and the taped interviews, he reacted by calling the academic community to boycott the members of this committee and the University of Haifa. Despite these violations of academic collegiality and ethics, **Dr. Pappe was never summoned by the disciplinary committee as the committee's chairperson decided not to pursue the complaint that had been filed against him.**

Although there is always more work to do, the University of Haifa is proud of its record of Arab-Jewish cooperation and reconciliation, both on campus and in the community. Twenty percent of our student body are Arab citizens of the

State of Israel, and the many Arab faculty members at Haifa include departmental chairs and a Dean. We will continue our efforts to further Jewish-Arab reconciliation, despite politically motivated initiatives to muzzle free speech and the academic discourse.

We are puzzled by the fact that despite the deluge of abuses of academic freedom throughout the world, the AUT has chosen to focus upon a politically spurious charge and, on the basis of false allegations, single out the University of Haifa for condemnation. The University of Haifa calls upon the AUT to rescind its resolution, one that represents a complete distortion of facts far more embarrassing to the AUT than to the University. We call upon the academic community throughout the free world to reject this politically motivated abuse of academic discourse.