



## **Resolution on Damage and Destruction of Libraries and other Cultural Institutions in Gaza**

Whereas, in the attack by Hamas on Israel on October 7, 2023, 1,200 lost their lives and hostages were taken, with many of them still held (1);

Whereas, the response by Israel in Gaza has resulted in over 24,000 lives lost so far, and a humanitarian crisis (2);

Whereas, on October 24, 2023, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) sent an 'Appeal for Respect for Human Rights, Cultural Conventions in Gaza and Israel' imploring all parties to uphold respect for human rights and dignity, in line with international law, and find a pathway to peace, and ensure humanitarian aid (3);

Whereas, the American Library Association (ALA) "deplores the destruction of libraries, library collections, and property, and the disruption of educational process by that act, whether it be done by individuals or groups of individuals, and whether it be done in the name of honest dissent, the desire to control or limit thought or ideas, or for any other purpose," (ALA Policy B.2.8) (4);

Whereas, during the current Israel-Hamas War, the Gaza Municipal Library and its library for children; the Diana Tamari Sabbagh Library, the Rashid al-Shawa Cultural Center, and other cultural institutions have been heavily damaged or destroyed (5);

Whereas, Policy B.2.8 was created in 1971 and in the last thirty-five years ALA has passed resolutions deploring the destruction of libraries and cultural resources during times of war in Ukraine, Iraq, Bosnia, Yugoslavia, Kosovo, and in previous conflict in Israel and Gaza (6), therefore be it



*Resolved*, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members

1. Implores all parties to uphold respect for human rights and dignity in line with international law, ensure access to humanitarian aid, and find a pathway to peace;
2. Deplores the destruction and damage of the Gaza Municipal Library, the Rashid al-Shawa Cultural Center, and other libraries and cultural institutions in Gaza;
3. Calls for the protection of libraries, schools, and other cultural institutions in Gaza and Israel and for both sides of the conflict to uphold the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict to take all feasible action to safeguard and respect all cultural property;
4. Urges the government of the United States, as well as other governments, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations to provide assistance for the reconstruction and restoration of libraries, schools, and other cultural institutions, including networking and other infrastructure, as soon as it is practicable in Gaza.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association  
Sunday, January 21, 2024, ALA LLX, Baltimore, MD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie Burger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leslie Burger, Interim ALA Executive  
Director, and Secretary of the ALA  
Council

(1) Hamas command in north Gaza destroyed, Israel says, BBC, January 7, 2024

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67904259>

(2) Israel Gaza war: Deal reached on aid to Gaza, including to hostages, BBC, January 17,

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68000227>

(3) Appeal for Respect for Human Rights, Cultural Conventions in Gaza and Israel, IFLA, October 23, 2023 <https://www.ifla.org/news/gaza-israel-appeal/#:~:text=We%20implore%20all%20parties%20to,the%20face%20of%20this%20conflict>

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(4) ALA Policy Manual <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual>

(5) Gazans mourn loss of their libraries: Cultural beacons and communal spaces. Washington Post, December 1, 2023 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/11/30/gaza-library-palestinian-culture/>

(6) ALA International Resolutions,

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/awardsactivities/international>