

The [response](#) of international organizations and women's rights groups to Hamas' extreme sexual violence has been shockingly muted. Earlier this week, the Israeli Mission to the United Nations hosted a [special session](#) at the UN to address sexual and gender-based violence in the October 7th terror attacks and to demand international organizations condemn these depredations as human rights violations. (Trigger warning: descriptions of sexual assault below).

- An in-depth report by [The Times of London](#) found that committing acts of sexual violence was part of the stated mission of the Hamas terrorists; further [investigations](#) have revealed the widespread extent of this.
- An Israeli police investigator [told the Knesset](#), Israel's Parliament, that more than 1,500 testimonies of acts of sexual violence, from alleged gang rape to post-mortem mutilation, have been provided. Disturbing details have been [shared](#) by survivors of the Supernova music festival and [described](#) by volunteers who received bodies at the morgue.
- Head of the International Crime Investigations Unit of the Israeli police Meni Binyamin [said](#) that autopsies, forensic evidence, and confessions from captured Hamas terrorists corroborate that sexual crimes were committed.
- Chair of the Israeli Civil Commission on Oct 7th Crimes by Hamas against Women and Children, Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy, [said](#) that the difficulty in completing the investigations will be extremely challenging as many of the women who were sexually assaulted and raped were subsequently murdered.
- Despite the UN's [stated](#) commitment to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, it took The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, known as UN Women, **over 50 days** to issue a [public statement](#) condemning the acts of violence perpetrated on that day. UN Secretary General António Guterres waited until November 29th to issue a [statement](#).
- Last week, a bipartisan group of 80 Members of Congress issued a [letter](#) to UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous that expressed outrage over international skepticism and denial of the atrocities and urged "UN Women to maintain its credibility by publicly denouncing the atrocious violation of women's rights by Hamas terrorists."
- A social media campaign sprouted with hashtags such as #MeTooUnlessUrAJew" and "#BelieveIsraeliWomen." Social media influencers have joined the condemnation of the deafening silence; among the most prominent influencers are [Sheryl Sandberg](#) and [Gal Gadot](#).
- Among those testifying this week was Zaka volunteer Simcha Greiman, who [recounted](#) that the body of one woman had "nails and different objects in her female organs." In another house, a person's genitals were so mutilated that "we couldn't identify if it was a man or a woman."
- Hillary Clinton also addressed the UN session by video, [saying](#): "Many women and girls were attacked brutally on October 7th. We must respond to weaponized sexual violence, wherever it happens, with absolute condemnation."

- Grave concern remains over the hostages still in captivity. State Department Spokesman Matthew Miller [said](#) that the department has “seen the reports that Hamas has committed sexual violence, they’ve committed rape, we have no reason at all to doubt those reports” and suggested that one of the reasons Hamas broke last week’s extended humanitarian pause and apparently does not want to release the remaining women hostages is because “they don’t want those women to be able to talk about what happened to them during their time in custody.”
- [Jewish Federations](#) are appalled by the lack of response from the international community and demand these crimes be investigated as human rights violations. We expect human rights activists to condemn these war crimes.