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PRESS RELEASE

"Antisemitism Has Become a Crisis of Truth, Not Only Hatred"

Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy Addresses Contemporary Antisemitism Haifa 2026, One of the World's Leading Academic Conferences on Contemporary Antisemitism

Speaking before philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy at the world's largest annual academic conference on contemporary antisemitism, Elkayam-Levy said that documenting the crimes of October 7 has become an act of resistance against the erosion of truth itself.

[Civil Commission] — Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy, Head of the Civil Commission, said that contemporary antisemitism has evolved beyond hostility toward Jews into what she described as "a crisis of truth" during an address at the *Contemporary Antisemitism Haifa 2026*, at the Comper Center at the University of Haifa, the world's largest annual academic conference dedicated to the study of antisemitism.

The conference brought together more than 250 scholars from around 20 countries and featured leading international thinkers, including philosopher **Bernard-Henri Lévy** and former **U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism Deborah Lipstadt**. Elkayam-Levy delivered her address immediately before Bernard-Henri Lévy.

Drawing on nearly three years of documenting the crimes committed during the October 7 Hamas attacks, Elkayam-Levy described how the violence was accompanied almost immediately by organized efforts to deny, distort, or undermine the credibility of victims' testimony and evidence.

"October 7 was not only a moment of atrocity," she said. "It was a crisis of truth. The violence and its erosion unfolded almost simultaneously. The burden shifted from those who deny to those who must continually prove."

Reflecting on her work documenting conflict-related sexual violence, Elkayam-Levy argued that antisemitism increasingly operates by destabilizing the conditions under which knowledge is produced and believed.

"Antisemitism does not only operate at the level of hostility," she said. "It operates at the level of perception. It introduces instability—not only around Jews, but around truth itself."

She described how the immediate questioning of victims' testimony, forensic evidence, and even footage recorded by the perpetrators fundamentally changed the nature of legal documentation following October 7.

Rather than serving solely as a legal record, she argued, documentation became "an epistemic practice"—a means of preserving truth in the face of systematic denial.

Reflecting on the challenges of documenting the October 7 atrocities, Elkayam-Levy described how the denial itself evolved alongside the evidence:

"We experienced denial that over time became more and more sophisticated. It served a role in fueling antisemitism worldwide. We were witnessing the sexual atrocities, bearing the trauma that at times made us physically ill, while simultaneously confronting very organized efforts to question, relativize, or politicize the evidence itself."

"Documentation is a theoretical intervention in a complex reality," Elkayam-Levy said. "It becomes a historical act. A form of epistemic resistance."

Elkayam-Levy also discussed the need to develop new legal concepts—including *kinocide* and *kinocidal sexual violence*—to describe forms of systematic violence against families that existing legal frameworks struggle to capture.

Her address drew on themes explored by Bernard-Henri Lévy in his recent work on October 7, particularly his argument that the massacre was immediately followed by attempts to erase or recast its meaning. Elkayam-Levy argued that this dynamic revealed an important dimension of contemporary antisemitism: not only the targeting of Jews, but the erosion of trust in Jewish testimony itself.

Concluding her remarks, she emphasized that defending truth has become inseparable from combating antisemitism.

"If antisemitism can undermine the credibility of Jewish testimony and destabilize the production of knowledge, then documenting the truth is not only a legal obligation—it is an act of resistance."



Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy and Bernard Henri-Levy | Credit: Yaniv Kopel



Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy | Credit: Yaniv Kopel

Contemporary Antisemitism Haifa 2026 is the world's largest annual academic conference devoted to the study of contemporary antisemitism. Held July 7–9 at the Comper Center at the University of Haifa, the conference brought together approximately 250 scholars from around 20 countries to examine the legal, historical, philosophical, political, and social dimensions of antisemitism.

Link to the closing event Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy, **Bernard-Henri Levy** *Contemporary Antisemitism Haifa 2026* <https://www.youtube.com/live/sRwzEb-wYew?si=Z4GgmnKqkPxQbWTj>

Link to the report **Sexual Terror Unveiled: The Untold Atrocities of October 7 and Against Hostages in Captivity**: <https://www.civilc.org/silenced-no-more>

Link to report on Kinocide: **Uncovering the Weaponization of Families on October 7, 2023**: <https://www.civilc.org/cc07-1-1>

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The Civil Commission was founded following Hamas's brutal October 7, 2023 attack on Israel, which left over 1,200 dead and more than 250 kidnapped. In response to the widespread murder, torture, rape, and abduction and ensuing denial, this independent non-profit was established to document, research, and raise global awareness of the war crimes and gender-based violence committed by Hamas and its collaborators. Led by human rights and international law expert **Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy**, the 2024 Israel Prize laureate, the Commission works to amplify victims' voices and confront denial in the international arena. Learn more: <https://www.civilc.org/>

About the Conference

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