

Dear AFSP Webinar committee

We are writing in protest at your decision to host a webinar by David Amias¹ on 7 September 2026. We are, frankly, astonished that AFSP should see fit to platform a webinar by a therapist who openly supports a racist apartheid state. Moreover he openly declares that he works for the Israeli Ministry of Defence, which is currently carrying out a genocide in Gaza, massacres in Lebanon and Iran and violent ethnic cleansing on the West Bank. We are asking AFSP to cancel David Amias' webinar immediately and to urgently review their policy of selecting webinars. We wonder whether you have any notion of how offensive this webinar is to those who have suffered, and continue to suffer, the brutal effects of Israeli assaults on every aspect of Palestinian life as well as on millions of Lebanese citizens. Israeli assaults have the clear and avowed intention of rendering Palestine uninhabitable for its indigenous Arab population.

Did you feel compelled to create 'balance' after hosting the webinar on Mental Health in Gaza by Gwyn Daniel, Danny McGowan and Yasser Abu Jamei in July this year? If so, what precisely do you understand by balance in a global context of such power imbalance? You claim as an organisation to be politically neutral. Given our ethical obligations as professionals this contention is deeply problematic. You are, we assume against the committing of genocide but you see fit to host a person as deeply implicated in the production and justification of genocide as David Amias is. Even if we accept your decision not to take a position, you cannot argue that this webinar is politically neutral. In your recent communication promoting David Amias' webinar the blurb says 'Rather than examining the political forces underpinning these conflicts...' But in the very next paragraph under the heading of 'The Israel Context' the text identifies a very specific event as **the** context for the webinar. That event is of course October the 7th 2023. Clearly this is neither a neutral nor a systemic perspective. Indeed, it is a dangerous distortion of the facts of which you may or may not be aware.

It is consistent with the position David Amias took in his recent article for JoFT. It is consistent too with the wider Israeli position with respect to their decades-long occupation and brutal treatment of the Palestinian population and indeed with the AFSP board's own statement on the anniversary on 7/10/2023 which erases the Palestinian narrative entirely.

The pairing of an Israeli and a Ukrainian therapist and a webinar description implying equivalence between the two contexts also suggests a distorted political understanding. It implies that each country is the victim of a similar type of assault rather than one (Ukraine) being the victim of genocide and the other (Israel) being the perpetrator of genocide.

¹ In line with the BDS movement we are calling for the cancellation of David Amias webinar on the grounds that through his employment by the Israeli Ministry of Defence he is deeply complicit in a system of oppression and occupation.

In his website², David Amias states that he currently lives in Kibbutz Bror Chayil³ and is working ‘in Israel in a Resilience Centre⁴ in the Sdot Negev⁵ area of the Gaza Envelope⁶ tackling trauma and anxiety in families under fire. Also working on behalf of the Ministry of Defence⁷ helping to rehabilitate individuals, couples and families affected by the ongoing security situation.’

Both in his work and in his JoFT article David Amias aligns himself with the decades-long history of Israel’s settler colonial crimes and their erasure in public discourse. His work, his affiliations, and place of residence are entangled with Israel’s settler colonial history, and raise ongoing questions of professional, ethical, and legal accountability.

To quote Adam Raz (2026) from his piece in Haaretz from February this year,

‘in Israel a deep gulf still separates memory and self-image, and reality. Crimes committed in 1948 are concealed and repressed, blanketed by a culture of silence. In large measure, recognition of the crimes of the past and of the denial that typically accompanies them is essential in order to come to terms with Israel's present. A society that, over generations, represses acts of massacre, murder and expulsion that it perpetrated, finds it easier to shut its eyes to what has been fomented in the Gaza strip over the past two years. This defective collective memory did not come into being by chance.... It’s the domain of an entire system: political, judicial, media.’

In promoting the webinar in the way it has, AFSP has likewise chosen concealment of and complicity with Israel’s settler colonial project and its crimes rather than standing in solidarity with its victims, the Palestinians. AFSP, as the representative body of UK family and systemic psychotherapists provides cover for a racist Zionist settler colonial state which refuses to be held accountable for the ethnic cleansing (beginning in 1948) of over 700,000 Palestinians, the massacres of civilians this entailed and with its ongoing eliminatory practices .

Without providing any meaningful context in its promotion of David Amias’ webinar, AFSP is guilty of providing cover, as Adam Raz writes, for the ‘death of an estimated 100,000 Palestinians in the Gaza strip after October 7th (2023). Along with the Executive Board of AFSP all of us comprising its paid-up membership should collectively hang our heads in shame at our complicity in normalising the continuing ethnic cleansing and genocide in Palestine.

AFSP is also contradicting its own aims of naming ‘white privilege and unequal power’, ‘striving ‘to influence wider social and political issues....and ‘learning together’ in matters of decolonial and liberation praxis’ Does AFSP consider Palestine to be an exception to this?

² [Family and Couple Therapy, Child Therapy, Clinical Supervision | Relationships](#)

³ [Bror Hayil - Wikipedia](#)

⁴ [Spotlight on the Resilience Center of Sdot Negev – ICAR Connect](#)

⁵ [sdot negev region - Search](#)

⁶ [what is the gaza envelope - Search](#)

⁷ [About the Israel Ministry of Defence | Homepage](#)

We would like to draw attention to the following contexts which are erased in AFSP's promotion of this webinar.

Historical Context

The land on which David Amias lives was once part of the Palestinian village of Burayr until it was attacked and captured by the Palmach and its inhabitants ethnically cleansed in May 1948⁸.

The attack on Burayr began at dawn on May 13th, 1948, and according to Dr Salman Abu Sitta, 125 residents of the village were massacred by the Jewish forces. The survivors fled becoming refugees in what is now the Gaza strip. As of 2020 the estimated number of descendants of these families who are now refugees is more than 30,000.

Research carried out at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, under the direction of the Palestinian historian Salah Abd al-Jawad has identified a significant number of massacres of Palestine civilians during 1948 of which Burayr is only one. The three most serious (where 100 or more civilians were killed by Israeli forces) occurred in Deir Yassin, Dawayima and Lod. Burayr was among six further massacres during which between 50 and 100 civilians were killed by Israeli forces.

According to Adam Raz (quoting the same research by al-Jawad) 'Civilians were massacred in one out of every five villages that were captured by the (Israeli) military.'

Services

The services David Amias works for as a family therapist operate within the Israeli apartheid system. That Israel practices apartheid is confirmed by Amnesty International and Israeli Human Rights organisation B'Tselem as well as many other International bodies. He works for the Resilience Centre in Sdot Negev and [Get Help Israel](#) (GHI) which offers subsidised therapy to IDF soldiers and reservists. Part of David Amias' therapeutic work through GHI is with 'Miluim couples'. These are Israeli couples one or both of whom are IDF reservists who are experiencing the emotional impact of returning from military operations in, for example, Gaza and Lebanon. In this way he is *directly* facilitating the atrocities committed by these very same soldiers. Does AFSP seriously consider this acceptable?

Legal

As noted above, David Amias lives in Bror Chayil beside the remains of the ethnically cleansed and largely erased Palestinian village of Burayr.

Under ICJ legal principles and UN declaration 194 and therefore international law⁹¹⁰ the former inhabitants of Burayr and all their descendants have the right of return to their homes or to be compensated by Israel. Israel rejects the right of return for Palestinian refugees because it would immediately compromise the basis of its racist ethno-supremacist project.

⁸ [Burayr - Wikipedia](#)

⁹ UN General Assembly Resolution 194 (1948)

¹⁰ ICJ legal principles

Questions for AFSP

1. Is it acceptable to members of the AFSP Board for systemic psychotherapists registered with it to work for genocidal armies?
2. Has the Board of AFSP therefore considered whether David Amias' employment within the Israeli Ministry of Defence is compatible with membership of AFSP?
3. Has the Board considered that promoting this webinar might represent a potential threat to AFSP's charitable status?
4. Are there contingency plans in place if AFSP is taken to court over these matters?

In summary, we consider that hosting this webinar is profoundly inconsistent with AFSP's own values of ethical, anti-racist and anti-colonial practice and we ask you to cancel it.

Family Therapists for Palestine

August 20 2026