



**July 24th, 2022**  
**25th of Tammuz, 5782**

**To:**  
**Attorney General of Israel Gali Baharav-Miara**  
**State Attorney Amit Isman**

**Re: Inappropriate Intervention by Senior Healthcare Officials to Dismiss Mr. Alon Beer from his Position as CEO of a Public Benefit Corporation**

We, the members of The Israeli Public Emergency Council For The COVID-19 Crisis (PECC), a voluntary organization whose members include about 30 of the top physicians and scientists in Israel, including five Hospital Administrators, two Former Directors General of the Ministry of Health, a former Health Maintenance Organization Director, Laureates of both the Nobel Prize and the Israel Prize, the President of a University, and Department Heads, are reaching out to you to express our grave concern about a new precedent that we have witnessed recently: Public servants have teamed up with politicians in calling for and acting toward the dismissal of an individual due to criticism he voiced towards them as a private citizen.

We call on you, as those who stand at the head of institutions entrusted with the rule of law, proper governance, and the preservation of fundamental rights, to make your voice heard on an issue that sets a dangerous precedent for anti-democratic processes that undermine fundamental rights and principles in Israel, first and foremost, the freedom of expression.

In March 2022, Mr. Alon Beer was elected to the position of CEO of a Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) from among hundreds of candidates. Two and a half months later, the Director General of the Ministry of Health, the Chair of the Israel Medical Association and Knesset Member Idit Silman wrote to the Minister of Diaspora Affairs, the Director General of his Ministry and to the Jewish Agency, demanding the dismissal of Mr. Beer due to past statements in which he criticized the conduct of the heads of the Ministry of Health.

It should be pointed out that Mr. Beer's words of criticism, although harsh, were voiced by him as a private person, and in the context of a conversation he conducted in various groups on social networks. Furthermore, his words were written at a time in which the heads of the Ministry of Health themselves, as well as their spokespersons and messengers, issued defamatory, offensive and divisive calls against those who did not go along with their positions and decisions regarding the COVID-19 crisis.



The heads of the healthcare system used harsh terms with problematic connotations against those who opposed their opinions. For example, the head of the Public Health Services, Dr. Sharon Alroy-Preis, called scientists and physicians who opposed the lockdowns "COVID deniers." Prof. Galia Rahav from the Sheba Medical Center used the horrific term "parasites" to describe those who did not get vaccinated against COVID-19. Prof. Gabi Barbash called for "imposing a lockdown" on the unvaccinated. Prof. Yehuda Adler called the children a "ticking time-bomb." Prof. Gili Regev-Yochay from the Sheba Medical Centre defined the PECC as "a dangerous entity." The Prime Minister at the time, Naftali Bennett, depicted the unvaccinated as those who "go around spraying machine-gun fire." Minister Nachman Shai said "those who are not vaccinated cannot take part in the general conduct of society." Dr. Meir Price, an employee of Clalit Health Services, defined the PECC as "agents of chaos" and called the Director of the Oncology Institute at Assaf Harofeh Medical Center, Dr. Raya Leibowitz, "pathetic." And these are just a few examples.

Following the demand of the heads of the Ministry of Health and the Israel Medical Association to fire Mr. Beer, an unprecedented smear campaign against him began in various media outlets, and his employers invited him to a hearing prior to dismissal.

At the end of the day, following discussion and in light of the atmosphere that had been created, Mr. Beer decided to announce his resignation from his position as CEO of the corporation.

As is well known, Freedom of Expression is one of the cornerstones of any viable democratic society. The meaning of Freedom of Speech is the recognition that every person has the right to express their opinion freely, as long as there is no violation of the law. What State Attorney Adv. Isman said, among other things, at a recent Israel Bar Association conference is highly relevant to this matter:

**"The social media networks, i.e. the modern market square, are a central platform for criticism. The discourse on social networks is often a harsh discourse, a discourse that some occasionally define as violent discourse. And yet, this discourse is also very important as part of freedom of expression and part of being a democratic country that sees freedom of expression as a fundamental right of the utmost importance... A strong democracy must be able to handle this kind of discourse as well, provided of course that the statements do not clearly and distinctly cross into the realm of criminal offense..."**





Indeed, in these powerful and unequivocal words, the State Attorney outlined the guiding principles regarding freedom of expression and the importance of preserving it.

It is certain that the demand of public officials, however senior they may be, to bring about the dismissal of a person and cause him the loss of his source of livelihood, and resulting in him being slandered and defamed in public, only because of criticism he voiced towards them publicly, is incompatible with freedom of expression (as is clear from your words quoted above) and constitutes the crossing of a red line that cannot be ignored.

Acquiescence to this conduct, or treating it as acceptable and legitimate, may create a new world of concepts, with traits of McCarthyism, in which ordinary citizens would be afraid to express themselves freely and voice their opinion and criticism about public servants. Given your commitment and responsibility to the rule of law, we are certain that there is no need to further detail the dangers inherent in this matter.

Therefore, and in accordance with the above, we, senior physicians, scientists, academics and legal experts, consider the conduct of the heads of the health system in the case of Alon Beer a red light that requires your response.

In our opinion, the sequence of events as detailed above and the extremely dangerous precedent that arises from it require intervention and a clear statement on the part of the judicial system and those at its head.

Based on the words of the State Attorney and your commitment to maintaining freedom of expression, we are confident that our request will receive the attention and actions required.

We would be grateful to receive your response to this letter as soon as possible.

Regards,

PECC Members:

Prof. Eti Einhorn, Prof. Asher Elhayany, Prof. Shoshy Altuvia, Prof. Elian Alkrinawi, Dr. Ron Babecoff, Dr. Orna Blondheim, Prof. Zvi Bentwich, Prof. Mira Barak, Prof. Dov Golan, Prof. Zvika Granot, Dr. Zeev Dgani, Prof. Gilad Haran, Dr. Michal Hemo Lotem, Dr. Yoav Yehezkelli, Prof. Emerita Rivka Carmi, Prof. Asa Kasher, Prof. Amnon Lahad, Prof. Retsef Levi, Prof. Michael Levitt, Dr. Michael Miro, Prof. Lechaim Naggan, Prof. Israel Silman, Dr. Yifat Abdi-Kork, Prof. Bruria Adini, Prof. Udi Qimron, Dr. Dotan Rousso, Prof. Eyal Shahr, Dr. Amir Shachar, Prof. Mordechai Shani, Dr. Guy Shinar.



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## PECC members 2022 (Part #1)



**Prof. Eti Einhorn**  
Information in Financial Markets, Accounting

The head of the accounting department at Tel Aviv University. An international expert in information economics, information in financial markets, financial accounting and reporting. Served on the board of governors of the Israel Securities Authority and on many public committees of various economic regulations.



**Prof. Asher Elhayany**  
Family Medicine, Public Health

Professor of Medicine, Specialist in Family Medicine and Public Administration. He served as the CEO of Meir Hospital, the director of the Central District at Clalit Medical Centre, and as the director of the United Health Fund. He served as chairman of the National Council for Health in the Community. Family doctor in the Negev.



**Prof. Shoshy Altuvia**  
Genetics

Dr. Joseph I. Bluestone Chair in Experimental Medicine Microbiology and Molecular Genetics  
The Hebrew University- Hadassah Medical School, Jerusalem. Expertise in Genetics and RNA mediated regulation of gene expression.



**Prof. Elian Alkrinawi**  
Welfare

Professor of Social Work, served as president of the Achva College, head of the Department of Social Work at Ben-Gurion University and as dean of the School of Social Work at Memorial University in Canada. Killam Award winner and beacon lighter at the 2013 Independence Day ceremony.



**Dr. Ron Babecoff**  
Biotechnology

Licensed veterinarian, Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (MEI) from ISEMI. Participating in the \$400 The Health Network. Founder and past President & CEO of BiondVax Pharmaceuticals. He built a biotech company from the conceptual idea and set up and ran a manufacturing plant and global human clinical trials including collaborations with the USA NIH and European consortium.



**Dr. Orna Blondheim**  
Pediatrics, Public Health

Specialist in Pediatrics and Neonatology as well as Director of Health Systems. She served as the director of the Schneider Children's Hospital and served 16 years as CEO of Emek Medical Center.



**Prof. Zvi Bentwich**  
Internal Medicine, Immunology

Professor of Medicine, specialist in Clinical Immunology and Infectious Diseases. Served as Chief of Department of Medicine, and pioneered AIDS medicine in Israel. Currently Head of Center for Tropical Diseases and AIDS at Ben-Gurion University. President of NALA Foundation for the Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases in Developing Countries and Board Member of Physicians for Human Rights in Israel.



**Prof. Mira Barak**  
Medical Lab Sciences

Professor of Medical Sciences, head of Medical Laboratory Sciences at Zefat Academic College. Managed the R&D division in Carmel Hospital, Director of Haifa and Western Galilee Central Laboratories in Clalit Health Services, founded and managed numerous clinical laboratories, including the central lab of Clalit, the Corona lab in the Northern region, and the designated corona lab at Ben Gurion airport.



**Prof. Dov Golan**  
Immunology, Medical Management

Professor of Medicine, specialist in Internal Medicine, clinical immunology, and medical management. A pioneer in the field of immunology in Israel, former Director-General of Rothschild Hospital, and former director of the Israeli Ministry of Health.



**Prof. Zvika Granot**  
Immunology

Professor of Immunology in the Faculty of Medicine at the Hebrew University. An international expert in the field of neutrophil research, is developing new approaches to immunotherapy.



**Dr. Zeev Dgani**  
Director of the Herzliya Hebrew Gymnasium

Established the School of Education at Tel Hai College, teaching leadership at the college. Director of school for disadvantaged girls in Jerusalem, and a high school. Received two doctoral degrees, in genetics and philosophy.



**Prof. Gilad Haran**  
Biophysics

Gilad Haran is a professor in the Department of Chemical and Biological Physics at the Weizmann Institute of Science. He served as the Dean of Chemistry in the Institute. Was involved in the development of the first-ever nano-drug, Doxil. Develops and applies in his lab novel methods for studying how proteins operate as tiny machines.



**Dr. Michal Hemo Lotem**  
Pediatrics

Pediatrician, Entrepreneur and author on leadership at medical futurism. Served as Vice President of Innovation at the Sheba Medical Center, and as a member of the Prime Minister's Advisory Council. Founded Beterem - Safe Kids Israel, and OSHEYA - Women Lead Wellness. Received Prime Minister's special Award for her contribution to children.



**Dr. Yoav Yehezkeili**  
Internal Medicine, Epidemic Treatment

Specialist in Internal Medicine and Medical Management. Former lecturer in the Department of Emergency and Disaster Management at Tel Aviv University. Lt. Col. Res. One of the founders of the epidemic management team and evaluation programs for extreme biological incidents. Served as a hospital's deputy director, district physician and district director of the primary care division in the HMOs. Medical consultant to KI research institute.



**Prof. Emerita Rivka Carmi**  
Pediatrics, Neonatology

Professor of Medicine, Specialist in Pediatrics, Neonatology and Medical Genetics. Served as Director of the Genetic Institute at Soroka Hospital, Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences at Ben-Gurion University, Chairman of the Dean of Medical Schools Association, President of Ben-Gurion University and Chairman of the Board of Universities.



**Prof. Asa Kasher**  
Ethics, Israel Prize

Professor Emeritus of Professional Ethics and Philosophy at Tel Aviv University. Laureate of the Israel Prize for Philosophy. Member of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts. Wrote dozens of state and public codes of ethics, including the military code of ethics, as well as serving as a member of several national public committees.





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## PECC members 2022 (Part #2)



**Prof. Amnon Lahad**  
Family Medicine

Specialist in Family Medicine (ISR) and Public health (US). Head departments of Family Medicine Hebrew University & Clalit Health Services, Jerusalem, Israel. Vice Dean Academia - Family medicine, Hebrew University. Chairman of the National Council for the Health of the Community. Active Family physician in Jerusalem.



**Prof. Michael Levitt**  
Computational biology, Biophysics

Professor of Computational and Structural Biology at Stanford University, Visiting Professor at the Weizmann Institute, Biophysicist, Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, Member of the National Academy of Sciences in the United States and the British Royal Society. One of the pioneers in simulating the molecular dynamics of DNA and proteins. Developed a method for medicinal use antibodies' humanization. Works with models of antibodies, RNA, protein folding and the spread of viruses.



**Prof. Lechaim Naggan**  
Epidemiology, Public Health

Professor of public health and epidemiology. Previously served as deputy chief medical officer in the IDF, the dean of the Department of Health Sciences at Ben Gurion University and, subsequently, as Vice President of the University and Dean of Research and Development. Prof. Naggan was awarded a Life Achievement award by the Union of Public Health Doctors.



**Dr. Yifat Abdi-Kork**  
Molecular Biology, Epidemiology

An expert in epidemiology and molecular biology, served as a Consultant to the national health basket public committee and Head of Pharmacoeconomics Department, Israeli Center for Technology Assessment in Health Care, the Gertner Institute.



**Prof. Udi Qimron**  
Immunology, Microbiology

Chair of the Department of Clinical Microbiology and Immunology at Tel Aviv University. Expert in T cells, mucosal vaccines, genetic engineering of bacterial viruses, and CRISPR. Published in Science, Nature and Cell and has won prestigious research grants including the ERC. Partner in the establishment of the SARS-CoV-2 testing laboratories.



**Prof. Eyal Shahar**  
Epidemiology, Public Health

Professor (Emeritus) of Public Health at the University of Arizona, MD from Tel Aviv University and MPH (epidemiology) from the University of Minnesota. An epidemiologist and methodologist in the fields of assessment and quantification of causal relationships and sources of bias in observational research.



**Prof. Mordechai Shani**  
Internal Medicine, Israel Prize

Professor of Medicine and Medical Management. Specialist in Internal Medicine. Winner of the Israel Prize. Served twice as Director General of the Ministry of Health and Director of Sheba Hospital, as well as Chairman of the Medicines Committee. Founded and managed the School of Public Health at Tel Aviv University, and also established and managed the National Institute for Health Policy Research.



**Prof. Retsef Levi**  
Operations Management

Professor of Operations Management at the MIT Sloan School of Management. An international expert in safety, risk management and analytics-driven design and optimization of health systems and biologic drugs manufacturing systems. He is leading several large-scale research collaborations across the world with leading industry enterprises and government organizations. He has consulted multiple state governments during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Dr. Michael Miro**  
Political Science, Media

Expert of journalism and Political Science. PhD in Political Science from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Former director of the Israeli public radio and journalist of society and the environment affairs for over 40 years. Today, a freelance, civil journalist and researcher of civil society. Characteristics and examination the abilities of civil power to influence decision-makers, while relying on rules of ethics.



**Prof. Israel Silman**  
Neurobiology

Professor Silman has served as the Head of the Neurobiology Department and directed the Nella and Leon Benozio Center for Neurosciences at the Weizmann Institute of Science. He is a former President of the Israeli Society for Neuroscience. For his breakthroughs in molecule medicine, he was awarded the Teva Founders Award as well as additional prizes.



**Prof. Bruria Adini**  
Emergency And Disaster

PhD in Health Systems Management, serves as head of the Department of Emergency and Disaster Management at Tel Aviv University. Former Head of the IDF Emergency Preparedness Division (Lt. Col.) and Senior Consultant to the Ministry of Health's Emergency Division.



**Dr. Dotan Rousso**  
Law

Dr. Dotan Rousso holds a Ph.D. in Law, BA., and MA. in Philosophy from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and was a visiting scholar at the Faculty of Law at the University of Toronto. He taught Criminal Law at Tel Aviv and Bar-Ilan Universities. Dr. Rousso is a lawyer who worked as head of a research team at the Israeli Parliament - The Knesset and as a state criminal prosecutor in Israel. He is currently a Philosophy lecturer at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) in



**Dr. Amir Shachar**  
Emergency Medicine, Cardiology

Specialist in internal medicine, cardiology, emergency medicine and health administration. Established and managed the Department of Emergency Medicine at Sheba Hospital, was deputy director of Meir Hospital and currently heading the ER at Laniado Hospital. Founded the Emergency Medicine department at Tel Aviv University.



**Dr. Guy Shinar**  
Medical Device Entrepreneur

Dr. Guy Shinar is a physicist with over 20 years of experience in medical device research and development, clinical trials and regulatory affairs. He is an inventor, co-founder and chief technology officer in several start-up companies. He holds a PhD degree from the Weizmann Institute of Science, where he specialized in systems biology and chemical reaction network theory.

