



Groningen, 16 January 2024

To:

Bureau of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS)
ICHS National Committees, International Affiliated Organizations, Internal Commissions

Re:

Location of the 24th International Congress of Historical Sciences in 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Meeting on 13 January 2024, the Board of the International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography (ICHTH) discussed the location of the 24th International Congress of Historical Sciences in 2026 and decided by secret and unanimous vote that Israel is not an acceptable location for the Congress. This means that our Commission will not participate in the Congress if it is held in Israel.

The ICHTH Board, already very critical when the location decision was originally taken, is primarily motivated by the armed conflict in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the appalling breaches of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by all warring parties. In addition, the Board expresses its serious concerns about free access and safety guarantees for Congress participants.

The decision is without prejudice to the ICHTH Board's great appreciation for the many preparatory efforts already undertaken by the ICHS and by the Historical Society of Israel and its partner organizations.

The freedoms of expression and assembly, including the organization of historical congresses, are robust human rights. They are rightly enshrined in Article 1 of the ICHS Constitution. However, they are not absolute. In the present circumstances, they are clearly outweighed by the imperatives of peace and justice.

With best wishes,

Antoon De Baets
ICHTH President, on behalf of the ICHTH Board
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