
Statements of Charles University on the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University

Recent statement

Summary of the current situation as of 19 January 2024 related to the tragic event at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University

The management of Charles University and the management of the Faculty of Arts thank everyone for their support so far and summarise the current situation in the area of financial and psychosocial support, in the area of improving security in the buildings of Charles University and in the area of bringing the Faculty of Arts building on Palach Square back to academic life.

Although the management of Charles University and the management of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University do not have an official list of injured individuals (or their relatives) available from the Police of the Czech Republic (PČR) or other components of the integrated rescue system (IZS), we were able to map a wide range of the injured parties. We are in contact with those who suffered injury and their relatives who have expressed interest and whose health condition allows it. We consider it appropriate to emphasise that in the public space, the management of CU and the management of the Faculty of Arts regularly invite the families of the injured and the survivors to contact the university and the Faculty of Arts - if it is in their power - at the **toll-free information line at +420 800 100 790**. We continue to welcome any assistance that is and will be provided to the injured in parallel with the assistance from CU.

The **Foundation Fund**, which immediately after the tragic event announced a collection to support the wounded and the families of the students and teachers killed, started providing the first part of financial support for the survivors in the first week of January. At the same time, the next phase is currently underway, namely the provision of rapid financial assistance for the injured. This process is ongoing, and will understandably still be implemented in the coming days. Thus, aid has already gone or is going out not only to the survivors but also to the injured with whom CU and the Fund are in contact. The Foundation Fund Board of Trustees is responding very promptly and will usually disburse the first wave of immediate support within 48 hours of coming into contact with those affected. A large part of the endowment will be distributed in a second wave of assistance based on mapping the needs of individuals, which takes time. At the same time, CU, in cooperation with the various components of the IZS, is preparing to provide funds for psychosocial assistance.

In recent weeks, CU management has worked intensively on refining the university's security strategy and specific measures in response to the tragic event, and this week approved an updated internal security plan for 2024 and 2025. In cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, it is also developing a long-term security plan aimed at building the overall institutional resilience of all CU buildings. The refinement of the security strategy includes, but is not limited to, the following specific steps: **a) enhancing the ability to respond appropriately in crisis situations, b) implementing an effective warning system using technology for rapid dissemination of information, c) possible modifications to buildings to enhance security, focusing in particular on lockdown procedures and the preparation of crisis packages, d) improving post-incident coordination, and e) expanding psychological counselling support.**

CU is working to restore academic life at the Faculty of Arts as soon as possible, including the restoration of teaching in its main building on Palach Square. A methodological material Return to School in Czech, English and Czech sign language has been prepared for teachers with recommendations on how to conduct communication and interaction with students after the tragedy. Three webinars on the use of the methodological materials were held (in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic and IZS units), which have been attended by approximately 950 teachers. Psychological support in the form of group and individual consultations was provided to more than 2000 people at CU (more than 1100 people through group work, more than 200 people through individual consultations, more than 700 people through chat). We consider the help of psychologists and interventionists of the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic, IZS and partner organisations to be very important, as they provide crisis intervention and professional treatment of traumatic experiences immediately after the event and until the end of January in full cooperation with the central crisis staff of CU.

Further information on the study and organisation of the summer semester at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University is now available. You can find a summary of them here:

<https://www.ff.cuni.cz/2024/01/obnova-akademickeho-zivota-na-fakulte-ii/>

The return of personal belongings from the main Faculty of Arts building is currently more than 90% complete. Picking up personal belongings will be possible throughout February, every Tuesday from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. and every Thursday from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. at CU POINT, Celetná 13, Prague 1.

On Sunday, 21 January 2024, the main building of the Faculty of Arts at Palach Square will host a "faculty reopening" as a dignified framework for commemorating the one-month anniversary of the tragic events of 21 December 2023. As part of the event, interested members of the academic community of the Faculty of Arts will be allowed to return to their home premises in the main building on a partial and temporary basis. Psychological support from the IZS and students of the Department of Psychology at CU (the Peerko Association) will also be available on site. The programme will also take place outside the Faculty of Arts building, not only at Jan Palach Square, but also in the premises of UMPRUM (processing of wax from votive candles left at the memorial site at the Carolinum) and at the main building of the Faculty of Arts. More detailed information can be found here (see in English below information in Czech) :

<https://www.ff.cuni.cz/2024/01/pootevreni-fakulty-21-1-2024/>.

In parallel with all the above-mentioned events, **the "Four weeks for the Faculty of Arts" event has been running and will continue**, the aim of which is to restore contact between students and staff of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University during the closure of the main building. Information can be found here (with some events highlighted in Czech and others in English)

<https://mesicprofakultu.ff.cuni.cz/>

The management of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University are doing their utmost to renew academic life at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University and stand by the earlier statement of the Rector of Charles University, Prof. Milena Králíčková, that our academic community enters the year 2024 hurt but not broken.

Archive of earlier statements

CU releases information on the timeline of events on 21. 12. 2023(9. 1. 2024)

The management of Charles University (CU) and the management of the CU Faculty of Arts would like to again express its gratitude to the Police Force of the Czech Republic for its intervention during the unique, brutal attack on the CU Faculty of Arts on December 21, 2023. It is beyond doubt that the intervention at the main building of the faculty on Jan Palach Square pre-vented a greater loss of life. We would like to thank all units of the emergency services for saving lives. The management of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts would also like to thank everyone involved for the emergency assistance and psychological and social assistance provided.

In connection with today's press conference at the Presidium of the Police Force of the Czech Republic and with questions submitted by the media, the Charles University Central Crisis Staff (CU CCS) is releasing its record of the sequence of important events during the afternoon and evening of December 21, 2023.

- [Sequence of important events during the intervention of the Police Force of the Czech Republic at the Carolinum on 21 December 2023 \(pdf\)](#)
- [Timeline of events before and during the attack on the Faculty of Arts of Charles University \(pdf\)](#)

CU Central Crisis Staff

Prague, January 9, 2024

Checked by: Václav Hájek, CU Press Officer

Charles University enters the New Year with head held high(04. 01. 2024, 18.30)

The management of Charles University (CU) and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University hereby provides the latest summary of the situation and coming steps over the course of January.

Main building

The main building of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University on Jan Palach Square **will remain closed until at least the end of January 2024**. The reasons are mainly technical condition of the building after the tragedy, including the police intervention to secure the site. There was damage to equipment, the destruction of more than 130 doors and there is a need to secure administrative materials and internal documents. This means it is not yet possible to resume normal operations. Many repairs also require a specific technical approach. The management of the Faculty of Arts, in cooperation with CU management, has already initiated the necessary repairs or preparations to commission major repairs. **A gradual (partial) re-opening of the building is expected with the start of the spring semester.**

Classes

Classes at the Faculty of Arts are cancelled until the end of the fall semester, i.e. January 12, 2024. The spring semester at the faculty will start according to the original schedule of the academic year on February 19, 2024. It is possible that some classes will be partially (especially initially) replaced by individual or online meetings. However, it is envisaged that teaching will be distributed in the spring semester to all buildings used by the Faculty of Arts, including the main building. Here, the process may be phased according to the accessibility of the spaces undergoing renovation. **The exception will be the 4th floor of the main building, which is likely to remain closed for the entire spring semester.** The opening of this floor is planned for the beginning of the new academic year 2024/2025. A permanent memorial is being considered for this floor.

The Faculty of Arts will be **accommodating to students in fulfilling their study obligations**, e.g. in terms of deadlines for fulfilling study obligations, who will also be able to use individual study plans. Specific information will be provided to students by the lecturers and/or the management of the relevant department of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University.

Security, now and into the future

Charles University did not and does not take security conditions lightly. In 2020, a security analysis was launched covering a total of 189 buildings belonging to the university - i.e. its faculties, dormitories, canteens and other university buildings. This was completed in 2022. Appropriate individual recommendations were gradually implemented, but wider and faster implementation was - and is - entirely dependent on available funding. For universities (as opposed to regional education), there was and is no subsidy related to the protection of soft targets. Nevertheless, CU will try to implement other appropriate measures in 2024, within the limits of possibility, e.g. an expansion of the early warning system, extension of training on behaviour of persons in crisis situations, strengthening of the central security line, revision of staffing in buildings or deepening cooperation with the emergency services and other organisations, especially in the field of security.

Helpline

From 5 January 2024, the so-called **CU Security Department line at +420 771 275 564** has also been strengthened in case of possible incidents.

Counselling services

In addition to the existing offer of professional psychological and spiritual assistance, Counselling services - Centrum Carolina, the Faculty of Arts of Charles University is introducing, after consultation with experts, so-called pedagogical-psychological instruction for employees (i.e. teachers and other staff) who are and will be in regular contact with students. The briefing will provide guidelines for handling situations during meetings or attestations etc., and will take place on Friday, 5 January, 2024 and Monday, 8 January, 2024 online. Further dates for the briefing or follow-up training will be announced by the faculty as required. The management of the Faculty of Arts, in cooperation with the heads of departments and institutes, announces that it will make every effort to ensure that lecturers are in regular contact with their learners and are available to them beyond the centrally circulated information.

Crisis line to be replaced by CU Point Information Line

The crisis line of the CU Central Staff will be replaced by the so-called CU Point Information Line as of 5 January 2024. **The +420 800 100 790 telephone number will not only offer extensive support to callers every working day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but will also answer questions about the issue of personal belongings left in the main building of the Faculty of Arts.** Outside these hours, it will of course be possible to leave a message on this line. **The picking-up of personal belongings** will take place throughout January 2024 every Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at CU POINT, Celetná 13, Prague 1 (specifically on 4 January; 9 January; 11 January; 16 January; 18 January; 23 January; 25 January and 30 January 2024). We kindly ask all those who did not find their personal belongings at the drop-off point complete or at all to contact the Czech Police Crisis Line directly: +420 974 823 158. Thank you for your understanding.

From 5 January 2024, the Faculty of Arts of Charles University will also launch an information e-mail address info@ff.cuni.cz for questions and suggestions.

Continuing support

As of 4 January 2024, the UK Endowment Fund and the *Znesnáze* collection had received financial aid worth **CZK 73 million**. These funds will be distributed in several phases. The first phase, so-called acute support, is already currently being directed to help the families of the victims and survivors. Charles University is also in contact with most of the families of the injured, whom the university also intends to help. CU understandably envisages that the financial support in both cases will be longer term. The third part of the support will be directed towards psychological and therapeutic assistance.

The return of academic life and the restoration of Jan Palach Square as the home of the Faculty of Arts is an essential part of the process of reconciliation with the tragic event. The launch was marked by a commemorative procession from the memorial site at the Carolinum to the main building of the Faculty of Arts. A commemorative flame was also lit on Jan Palach Square, which will stay lit throughout the month of January.

On 5 January 2024 at 10 a.m., candles and other objects will be removed from the current memorial site in front of the Carolinum building. The plan is to use the items to create a new memorial, a concept to be developed as part of the Month for the Faculty activities. The Month for the Faculty initiative will also include a commemoration of the first month since the tragic events of 12/21/2023.

We are hurt, but we are not broken. We give thanks that members of the academic community have entered the new year with heads held high.

The management of Charles University and the management of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University

(Prague, January 4 . 2024, 18.30)

The University grieves and continues to provide assistance and support(23. 12. 2023, 17.00)

The management of Charles University (CU) and the Faculty of Arts (FF UK) summarize the situation and the procedures to which the university has resorted in recent hours.

The main building of the UK Faculty of Arts is secure at the moment but **remains closed until further notice** for obvious reasons. We will keep you informed about the further procedure and also remind you that the management of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University has announced a **dean's leave until 2 January 2024 inclusive**.

Personal belongings that were left in the building in an appropriate condition after Thursday's attack are **being released at the Faculty of Law of the Charles University** at Náměstí Curieových 7 (Prague), for whose cooperation we are grateful. The next drop-off date for personal belongings will take place on Wednesday, December 27, 2023 between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m., again at the PF UK building. We would also like to thank the Czech Red Cross, who, in agreement with the CU crisis staff, under the supervision of security personnel and technicians, arranged for the sorting of items and their transport to the PF UK during tonight's event. A number of volunteers participated in the whole event, and many thanks are due to the management of the CU and the Faculty of Arts of the CU.

The University is still calling on everyone if they feel any need for **psychological help** to use it - it is offered not only by the CU ([information can be found here](#)), but also by the free crisis line of the Police of the Czech Republic: +974 823 158. Please do not hesitate to ask for help.

Although the UK management (the UK Central Crisis Staff) has received a number of urgings in recent hours to publish the list of names of the victims of Thursday's tragic shooting, it hereby declares that it **will not publish the names, especially for reasons of remembrance**. This is not only an agreement with the Czech Police, but also to protect the personal data of the victims.

Charles University is **grateful for the support and cohesion** of the entire university community and the words of comfort from the general public that have come not only from the Czech Republic but from all over the world. We are also grateful for the financial support that comes from hundreds of donors to the CU Endowment Fund, which currently totals more than CZK 30 million. The UK will decide and transparently inform about the specific steps of spending the Endowment Fund (for obvious reasons only at the beginning of 2024).

The management of Charles University welcomes the opening of debates on the strategy of security at universities and is ready to actively participate in it, as well as the convening of a meeting of rectors with the Minister of the Ministry of Education, representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic and the Czech Police, where the aim will (hopefully) be the creation of a joint strategy to ensure the security of universities and standards of security in buildings.

We greatly appreciate and thank all those who are doing their part to help resolve the situation and find ways to cope with the current situation. We would like to thank all the volunteers, all those involved from the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Arts, the Rector's Office, students of the Faculty of Arts and all other faculties, as well as all the people who help selflessly and willingly with good will. This work also helps us all to cope with this terrible tragedy.

The management of the University, together with the management of the Faculty of Arts, **reiterates its unceasing regret and sorrow** for the lives lost and for the losses that have been indelibly etched in the souls of us all. We extend our heartfelt condolences to all the survivors, families and friends of the victims.

Charles University will **continue to provide organizational, material and psychological support** to all those in need in the coming days, while at the same time striving to ensure a peaceful return to campus for all those affected. Charles University and our society will never again be the same as we knew it until the tragic afternoon of December 21, 2023.

Our thoughts are with you all in these difficult Christmas times marked by pain and loss.

Thank you for being with us during this difficult time.

CU Central Crisis Staff

(Prague, December 23, 2023, 17.00)

Charles University informs about the current situation and thanks for the expressions of support(22. 12. 2023, 14.30)

Charles University held a memorial service today (December 22) in front of the main entrance to the Carolinum building at Ovocný trh in Prague, honoring the victims of the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. Charles University's leadership including rector Milena Králíčková, dean of the Faculty of Arts Eva Lehečková, the leadership of the Faculty of Philosophy, and representatives of the Czech Rectors' Conference, laid wreaths at the memorial site. Many other public figures participated in this memorial service, including the Prime Minister Petr Fiala, ministers of the Czech government, ambassadors, members of the academic community, and the general public.

Charles University has not yet been officially informed by the Czech Police about the identities of the victims. Therefore, the university's leadership cannot communicate this information to the leadership of the Faculty of Arts. However, the

university is understandably in contact with the relevant authorities. The families of the deceased and the injured have already been contacted by the Czech Police. Most of the injured are in a stable condition, with one person currently in serious condition.

Since last night, Charles University has been actively cooperating in analyzing the situation with soft target protection expert Zdeněk Kalvach. Soft targets refer to places with a high concentration of people and, by nature, usually difficult to secure. These places are vulnerable to unexpected violent attacks, such as the one faced by innocents at the Faculty of Arts, on Thursday, December 21, 2023, in the afternoon.

Currently, the building of the Faculty of Arts remains inaccessible. The police have handed the building over to the university, but so far, only security staff and technicians who are assessing the building's condition and damage have been allowed in. Personal belongings are currently not permitted to be retrieved from the building. As soon as there is a change in this matter, and it becomes possible to retrieve items, Charles University will inform everyone immediately. Thank you for your understanding.

The leadership of the Faculty of Arts has declared a dean's holiday until January 2, 2024.

The Charles University Endowment Fund has launched a collection to support the families of the victims and also faculty, staff, and students affected by the shooting at the Faculty of Arts. Charles University greatly appreciates the support that victims receive from Czech and foreign institutions, companies, and individuals through the Endowment Fund. The fund's collection currently exceeds 16 million CZK (over \$700 000), with more contributions promised. The use of these funds will be coordinated with the leadership of the Faculty of Arts. Thank you all!

On Friday, December 22, 2023, at 19:30, an ecumenical service for the victims of the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University will take place in the Church of the Holy Salvator (Křížovnická 4) in Prague and will be led by Msgr. prof. Tomáš Halík. On Saturday, December 23, 2023, at 11:00, a requiem for the victims of the shooting in the St. Vitus Cathedral will be held. The event is organized by the Prague Archbishopric and the Prague Castle. On Saturday, December 23, 2023, at 15:00, an ecumenical prayer will take place in the church of St. Martina ve zdi (Martinská 8, Prague) to hold a moment of silence for the victims of the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University.

The leadership of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts are currently addressing a large number of suggestions and inquiries related to the situation. Even with enormous efforts to respond promptly, quick reactions cannot be guaranteed at this time.

We kindly ask everyone, especially the media, to approach the topic of death and the families of the deceased with sensitivity and to give them the necessary peace in which they can mourn. Thank you.

We keep the families of the deceased and injured in our thoughts.

Leadership of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts

(Prague, December 22, 2023, 14..30)

Statement of Rector of Charles University and Dean of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University on the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University(21. 12. 2023, 23.00; updated 22. 12. 10.00)

Dear colleagues, dear students,

In connection with the tragic events that took place at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University on December 21, 2023, in which lives were lost and many people were badly injured, we, together with the management of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, express our deepest condolences to all the bereaved families who lost loved ones. Our thoughts are equally with those who are now fighting to survive in hospital and their families.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to preventing a more significant loss of life, to the components of the integrated rescue system, and to all the medical and paramedics who are now caring for our injured in hospitals.

As tragic as the attack on Thursday was and as terrible a shock it is, it is important to point out that there is no evidence that it was of ethnic or racial origin.

We are aware that this extreme and dire situation has severely affected not only the entire academic community of Charles University but the broader public and also shocked many people abroad. Therefore, Charles University is now offering all of its students and staff an extended spectrum of support in the form of psychological assistance at its counseling centers and outside of Charles University .

From the very first moment, the management of Charles University, as well as the management of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University, in cooperation with the security forces, dealt with the situation within the framework of a quickly established crisis staff. It also recommended cancelling all university events on Friday (December 22, 2023), including

classes, for reasons of commemoration. A commemorative site has been set up at the Carolinum (Ovocný trh 3, Prague) by the fountain, a typical meeting place for students and staff. People began lighting candles there on Thursday night.

The Charles University Foundation has also announced a collection to support the families of the victims, teachers, and students affected by the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. [You can donate HERE.](#)

The level of violence that took place today at Charles University is absolutely uncharted territory and shocking for our academic community and for the Czech Republic. Let us, therefore, stand together in these difficult moments. We ask everyone to try to remain calm and composed, and we again express our condolences to all those whose hearts have been broken by the loss of loved ones.

We are with you all at this difficult time, and thank you very much for your support so far and in the future.

On behalf of the entire administration of Charles University and the Faculty of Arts of Charles University

Milena Králíčková, Rector of Charles University

Eva Lehečková, Dean of the Faculty of Arts of Charles University

(Prague, December 21, 2023, 23.00; updated 22. 12. 10.00)

Statement of Charles University on the shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University(21. 12. 2023, 18.10)

Today in the afternoon, a completely unprecedented situation occurred at Charles University (CU) and its Faculty of Arts, where not only injuries but also casualties occurred. The management of the University together with the management of the Faculty of Arts in cooperation with the security forces have been dealing with the situation since the first moments, and the crisis staff of the University was established.

Among other things, the CU management strongly and with immediate effect recommended tightening security measures in university buildings and at the same time cancelling today's evening and tomorrow's events with an expected attendance of more than 20 people, and called for an adequate and sensitive approach to tomorrow's possible exams or credit examinations.

There are and will be networks of contacts for [HELP lines \(psychological help\)](#) , e.g. a crisis chat is currently running where support is provided from trained psychologists - crisis interventionists and [crisis and psychological support and help](#) .

We mourn the loss of life of members of our university community, express our deepest condolences to all the bereaved and our thoughts are with all those affected by the tragedy.

We now ask everyone to try to remain calm and composed, and we again extend our condolences to all those whose hearts have been broken by the loss of loved ones.

Further information will follow shortly in view of the constantly evolving situation.

Charles University Management

(Prague, December 21, 2023, 18..10)
