Major UN human rights figure seeks to target NGOs that criticize Francesca Albanese

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The Chairwoman of a committee dealing with all UN Human Rights Council-appointed experts, known as ‘Special Procedures,’ has called for critics of United Nations Special Rapporteur on Palestinian Territories Francesca Albanese to be punished for calling out Albanese's outrageous statements and behavior in the aftermath of the Hamas massacre of October 7.

Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures Chairwoman Isha Dyfan, in a letter dated December 4, 2023, to UN Human Rights Council President Václav Bálek, called for organizations that have criticized Albanese over the last two months to lose their UN accreditation.

‘Some of my colleagues have been facing intimidation and baseless accusations about their integrity and motivations, which I find deeply regrettable,’ Dyfan wrote. ‘Lately, these attacks concerned, among others, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including East Jerusalem, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burundi, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression and the Special Rapporteur on the impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights.’

According to Dyfan, ‘claims of partial and unprofessional conduct’ against Albanese are ‘designed to damage reputations, including publicly involving family members, thereby potentially creating insecurity.’

She further stated that it is ‘unacceptable that mandateholders are insulted, publicly or otherwise, or personally attacked or threatened for discharging their mandates.’

‘There has been an increase in such attacks recently, especially in the context of the developments in Israel and Gaza. We are extremely concerned by continuing efforts by certain States and non-governmental organisations to undermine and denigrate important mechanisms established by the 47 Member States of the Human Rights Council,’ she said.

In particular, she stated that ‘Non-governmental organisations that are accredited by ECOSOC should also be held accountable for conduct that is unbecoming of their status.’

UN-accredited NGOs that could be affected by this demand include NGO Monitor, the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, UN Watch, B'nai B'rith, World Jewish Congress, and the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists, all of which have criticized Albanese.

Touro Insitute on Human Rights director and the Holocaust Director and Human Rights Voices President Professor Anne Bayefsky told *Israel National News - Arutz Sheva*that Dyfan's letter was merely another attempt to silence those who call out antisemitism.

‘It is important to recognize that the so-called ‘human rights’ world prides itself on listening to victims - except when it comes to Jews. Jews, and especially Israeli Jews, who experience, describe, and define their felt antisemitism, are the only minority not entitled to protest such attacks. On the contrary, the antisemites spin it as ‘diversion’ and an attempt to avoid ‘any critical voice.’ That is a lie and yet another form of anti-Jewish discrimination. UN human rights actors such as Albanese and Navi Pillay, chair of the UN Human Rights Council's permanent Commission of Inquiry established to investigate alleged Israeli war crimes, suddenly claiming they are the victims of ‘personal’ attacks. This is an absurd criticism since the criteria for holding their jobs, namely, ‘objectivity,’ ‘impartiality,’ ‘integrity,’ are by definition personal, as are their failures to meet those standards,’ Prf. Bayefsky said.

She added: ‘This latest attempt to threaten the status of UN-accredited NGOs that are not a part of their Israel-bashing NGO-UN cabal is despicable. Silencing Jewish voices is obviously the antithesis of their ‘free speech’ rhetoric. Threatening UN-accredited NGOs with silencing - because the phony UN human rights ‘experts’ can't answer the facts and the charges of antisemitism - is one more reason they are not fit to hold office.’

Albanese, who has faced criticism in the past for her anti-Israel bias and antisemitic statements, has come under renewed criticism for her extreme positions following October 7, when the Hamas terrorist organization murdered over 1,200 people and took 240 hostages in the worst massacre of the Jewish people since the Nazi Holocaust.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center, a respected Jewish human rights NGO that monitors antisemitism, called for Albanese to be fired after she published a book less than two months after the massacre in which she co-opted the phrase used to call out the antisemitism behind the trial of Alfred Dreyfus in 1898, 'J'Accuse,' to attack Israel's efforts to defend the lives of its citizens.

The Wiesenthal Center stated that, regardless of the text's content, Albanese's use of 'J'Accuse' for the title of her book ‘appears to be a deliberate misappropriation of Jewish heritage and narrative.’

[Last week,](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/381464) Albanese responded to a tweet by former State Department official Dennis Ross, who wrote: ‘The suffering of Palestinians in Gaza is real. Why not call on Hamas to release all hostages and agree to have its leaders leave Gaza. They could save Palestinians from paying a further price. Real support for Palestinians should produce such a call. Isn’t it time for that?’

The Special Rapporteur wrote in response: ‘Regrettably, this sounds like: - putting the onus to end the carnage in Gaza on the Palestinians, including those being slaughtered in Gaza; - justifying and deflecting the attention from the atrocities committed by the Israeli army in Gaza. Unacceptable.’

[In November,](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/380363) during a speech to the National Press Club in Canberra, Australia, Albanese claimed that Israel had no right to engage in a war in response to the massacre, saying: ‘Israel cannot claim the right of self-defence against a threat that emanates from a territory it occupies, from a territory that is under belligerent occupation.’

Albanese also told the *Sydney Morning Herald* on November 13 that Hamas is ‘entitled to embrace resistance,’ including the use of violence, against Israel.

Director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust Prof. Anne Bayefsky noted following these comments that Albanese had denied the mass rapes committed on October 7 and stated that she was engaging in ‘blood libels and incitement to violence.’

‘Albanese’s abhorrent remarks go hand-in-hand with all her other legally-indefensible claims, such as defending a Palestinian 'right to resist' that 'requires violence,'‘ she told *Fox News,* adding that Albanese is part of a group of extremely anti-Israel UN officials who are ‘champions of hate, of antisemitism, of lethal violence against the Jewish people. It is an atrocity that they are given U.N. titles and a global platform of any kind at all.’

UN Watch Executive Director Hillel Neuer said that ‘the reason they picked [Albanese] is because she is extremely biased. This is someone who, in 2014, wrote on Facebook that, ‘America is subjugated by the Jewish Lobby.’ This is someone who a year ago, in November 2022, spoke to a Hamas conference of terrorists and she said, ‘you have a right to resist.’ This is someone who has regularly compared the situation of Palestinians to the Nazi holocaust. So she is the last thing that has anything to do with impartiality, neutrality, objectivity, and she should be exposed.’

Albanese, for her part, has dismissed the accusations of antisemitism against her as ‘just a way to distract, to deflect the attention from the content that we, human rights community, try to bring forward.’

In a press briefing with other UN officials on the Arab-Israeli conflict on October 25, Albanese claimed that ‘There is a continuous smear of anyone who utters words of criticism vis-à-vis Israel. So the attacks range from the heinous allegations of antisemitism.’

Other officials from the UN Human Rights Council have also defended Albanese after every outrageous comment she has made.

During the same press briefing, Navi Pillay, the chair of the UN Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry established to investigate alleged Israeli war crimes without limit, stated that ‘we should not be subject to abuse such as this, which is just totally false. I don’t want to go into all the things they said. They’re all false and lies.’