

UN Expert's Report Accuses Israel of Committing Genocide in Gaza

Description

by Mary Manley via Sputnik



The expert is not the first to warn that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians. Scholars and states, including a case brought by South Africa in December, have warned that offensive acts carried out by Israel in their war against Hamas have amounted to acts of genocide against civilians in the Gaza Strip.

A United Nations-appointed expert has found that there are “reasonable grounds” to believe Israel is committing genocide in the Gaza Strip, according to a report released on Monday. The expert said there are clear indications that Israel has violated three of the five acts listed under the UN Genocide Convention.

“It is my solemn duty to report on the worst of what humanity is capable of and to present my findings,” Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Occupied Territories, told the UN Human Rights Council on Tuesday. The Italian lawyer is one of dozens of independent human rights experts mandated by the UN to report and advise on specific themes and crises.

The UN expert wrote that she found “reasonable grounds to believe” that the “threshold indicating the commission of the crime of genocide against Palestinians as a group in Gaza has been met”.

“I implore member states to abide by their obligations, which start with imposing an arms embargo and sanctions on Israel and so ensure that the future does not continue to repeat

itself,” she said.

The report, [“The Anatomy of a Genocide”](#), writes that after “five months of military operations, Israel has destroyed Gaza”. It notes that over 30,000 Palestinians have been killed, including more than 13,000 children.

At least 71,000 Palestinians have also been injured, the report says, with many receiving “life-changing mutilations”. At least 70% of residential areas have also been destroyed, and 80% of the whole population has been “forcibly displaced”.

“This report concludes that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating [Israel's commission of genocide](#) is met,” the report writes. “One of the key findings is that Israel’s executive and military leadership and soldiers have intentionally distorted jus in bello principles, subverting their protective functions, in an attempt to legitimize genocidal violence against the Palestinian people.”

Albanese was prohibited by Israel to visit the war-torn region, therefore the report was based on “data and analyses from organizations on the ground, international jurisprudence, investigative reports and consultations with affected individuals, authorities, civil society and experts.”

Nor did the report examine the crimes committed by Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups in Israel on October 7—which it “firmly condemns” and urges the accountability of—as it is beyond the “geographic scope” of the expert’s mandate. It also noted that **Israel has carried out “five major assaults” on Palestine** since it imposed the siege on Gaza in 2007.

“By Day 9, this assault had already caused more deaths (2,670) than Israel’s previous deadliest war against Gaza, in 2014 (2,251). Only a fraction of the mass killing, severe harm and ruthless, life-threatening conditions inflicted on Palestinians over the following five months of assault can be captured in this report,” she writes.

The 1948 Genocide Convention, which was enacted in the wake of the mass murder of Jews in the Nazi Holocaust, defines [genocide](#) as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious groups”. Israel’s diplomatic mission in Geneva has rejected the report and maintained that the war is targeting the Islamist group Hamas and not Palestinian civilians.

An [official](#) from the US, Israel’s top ally, told AFP that Washington is “aware” of the report but has “no reason to believe Israel has committed acts of genocide in Gaza”.

“Many could not bury and mourn their relatives, forced instead to leave their bodies decomposing in homes, in the street or under the rubble,” the report writes. “Thousands have been detained and systematically subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment. The incalculable collective trauma will be experienced for generations to come.”

“Israel’s actions have been driven by a genocidal logic integral to its settler-colonial project in Palestine, signaling a tragedy foretold.”