



Threshold of genocide has been met in Gaza: UN official

Description

UN : UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca Albanese said on 26 March that there were “reasonable grounds” for believing that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

“Following nearly six months of unrelenting Israeli assault on occupied Gaza, it is my solemn duty to report on the worst of what humanity is capable of, and to present my findings,” Albanese said during the dialogue at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, where she was presenting her latest report titled “Anatomy of a Genocide.”

“There are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating the commission of the crime of genocide ... has been met,” Albanese added.

Albanese defined genocide as calculated actions committed with the desire to destroy, partially or in full, a nation, ethnicity, or racial or religious group.

“Israel has committed three acts of genocide with the requisite intent, causing seriously serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, and imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group,” the human rights expert said.

Albanese framed the ongoing genocide in Gaza as the most severe stage of a “long-standing settler-colonial process of erasure of the native Palestinians.”

“For over 76 years, this process has oppressed the Palestinians as a people in every way imaginable, crushing their inalienable right to self-determination demographically, economically, territorially, culturally, and politically,” she said.

“[The] colonial amnesia of the West has condoned Israel’s colonial settler project,” adding

that “the world now sees the bitter fruit of the impunity afforded to Israel. This was a tragedy foretold.”

Albanese asked member states to issue an arms embargo and sanctions on Israel in order for a repeat of the current catastrophe to be deterred.

Israel has previously expressed its distaste towards the UN special rapporteur. In February, Tel Aviv implemented a visa ban on Albanese for saying that the Palestinian resistance’s Al-Aqsa Flood operation was not ‘anti-jewish,’ but a reaction to Israel’s oppression of the Palestinian people.

“If the UN wants to return to being a relevant body, its leaders must publicly disavow the antisemitic words of the ‘special envoy’ – and fire her permanently.

Preventing her from entering Israel might remind her of the real reason why Hamas slaughtered babies, women, and [the elderly].” Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz and Interior Minister Moshe Arbel said in a joint statement.

In response, Albanese said that barring her entry into Israel was nothing new, as Tel Aviv has blocked other UN Special Rapporteurs since 2008.

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Date Created

03/28/2024