



US State Department Arabic Spokesperson Resigns in Opposition to Gaza Policy

Description

WORLD : The Arabic language spokesperson of the U.S. State Department has resigned, citing her opposition to Washington's policy related to the war in Gaza, in at least the third resignation from the department over the issue.

Hala Rharrit was also the Dubai Regional Media Hub's deputy director and joined the State Department almost two decades ago as a political and human rights officer, the department's website showed.

"I resigned April 2024 after 18 years of distinguished service in opposition to the United States' Gaza policy," she wrote on social media website LinkedIn.

A State Department spokesperson, asked about the resignation in Thursday's press briefing, said the department has channels for its workforce to share views when it disagrees with government policies.

War in Israel and Gaza

Nearly a month earlier, Annelle Sheline of the State Department's human rights bureau announced her resignation, and State Department official Josh Paul resigned in October.

A senior official in the U.S. Education Department, Tariq Habash, who is Palestinian-American, had stepped down in January.

The United States has come under mounting criticism internationally and from human rights groups over its support for Israel amid Israel's ongoing assault in Gaza that has killed tens of thousands and caused a humanitarian crisis.

There have been reports of signs of dissent in the administration of President Joe Biden as deaths continue to grow in the war.

In November, more than 1,000 officials in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), part of the State Department, signed an open letter calling for an immediate ceasefire. Cables criticizing the

administration's policy have also been filed with the State Department's internal "dissent channel."

The war has also caused intense discourse and anti-war demonstrations across the United States, Israel's most important ally.

Palestinian Islamist group Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, killing 1,200 people, according to Israeli tallies. Israel has killed over 34,000 people in Hamas-governed Gaza, according to Gaza's health ministry, leading to widespread displacement, hunger and genocide allegations that Israel denies.

By Kanishka Singh

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