



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Fifty-fifth session

26 February–5 April 2024

Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

## **Written statement\* submitted by Institute for NGO Research, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[5 February 2024]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **International Community Must Hold Palestinian Perpetrators Accountable for Sexual Crimes against Women**

On October 7, 2023, thousands of Palestinian terrorists poured across the border from Gaza into Israel, slaughtering 1200 people, torturing and maiming thousands, including 36 children who were slaughtered in their homes. Hamas, and other terrorist groups, also kidnapped more than 200 individuals, including women and children.

Survivors of the barbaric attack have reported witnessing the brutal raping of women and Hamas has published horrific images on social media showing members of Hamas engaging in sexual assault. Women and girls were paraded naked through the streets of Gaza while onlookers cheered. In one viral video, the near-naked and bloodied body of an Israeli German woman who was abducted from a music festival who was later declared dead is seen being paraded through the streets of Gaza in the back of a pickup truck. Crowds of Palestinian civilians are seen cheering and spitting on her deformed body while chanting “Allah hu akbar.” According to rescue units, there were “bodies of women and girls raped with such violence that their pelvic bones were broken.” The Israeli Police Chief confirmed that a pregnant woman’s stomach was sliced open and her fetus removed while she was alive, and that women’s breasts were sliced off and tossed around. Testimony from captured Hamas terrorists revealed they were ordered to rape whoever they came across, and found amongst the bodies of Hamas terrorists was an Arabic-Hebrew transliteration glossary with sexual terminology, including “take your pants off.”

Unfortunately, international women’s organizations and the United Nations have said almost nothing on the brutality faced by Israeli women during Hamas’ aggression, war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Nearly two months after the brutal rampage and only following widespread condemnation for her silence did the UN Women executive director first mention she was “alarmed by disturbing reports of gender-based and sexual violence,” failing to mention Hamas or Israeli victims. After only more condemnation and two more weeks did UN Women issue a statement condemning Hamas’ use of sexual violence. Likewise, the UN Secretary General didn’t condemn the sexual violence against Israeli women until eight weeks after the atrocities.

In response to the silence by the United Nations, Professor Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, who served for 12 years on the UN Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, affirmed she felt “completely betrayed” by the international women’s rights organizations for their failure to condemn – or even recognize – the rape, kidnapping and other atrocities committed by Hamas terrorists against Israeli citizens on October 7.

International campaigns were launched and rallies were held to express outrage at the silence by international bodies whose mission was to protect the rights of women. The hashtag “#MeTooUnlessURAJew” spread widely on social media. At a December rally in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, one of the organizers declared, “All murdered, raped, abused, humiliated, mutilated women and all the ones who are still in captivity as we stand here today, and all the survivors, deserve much better than words. We will not tolerate this, and we won’t be silenced. We won’t stop. This act of UN Women will never be forgiven or forgotten.”

The international community must hold Palestinian perpetrators accountable for international crimes against women, including sanctions, prosecution, and punishment. UN officials and special experts, motivated by discriminatory attitudes, must also be held accountable for their shameful silence because the victims were Israeli and Jewish.

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