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Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

Written statement submitted by United Nations Watch, 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.

[29 May 2025]

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



Objections to the Reappointment of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967

In April 2025, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, shared on her social media a post claiming that the “UN human rights council voted to keep her in the position as UN rapporteur for the Palestinian territories till 2028!”¹ In fact, however, no such vote ever took place.

At best, Ms. Albanese could possibly claim that several stakeholders consider that her reappointment took place tacitly, in the absence of any vote or debate about her record of non-compliance.

Yet even this claim is not substantiated by the law or the facts. The law is clear. Only one resolution deals specifically with this matter, entitled “Terms of office of special procedure mandate-holders,” which was adopted by consensus in 2008 as UNHRC Presidential Statement 8/PRST/2.2 This text stipulates: “The President of the Human Rights Council will convey to the Council information brought to his or her attention... concerning cases of persistent non-compliance by a mandate-holder,” and this requirement applies “particularly in advance of reappointments.” The Council is then mandated to “consider such information and act upon it as appropriate.” Only “[i]n the absence of the above-mentioned information,” are the terms in office of the mandate-holders “extended for a second three-year term.”

The above constitute clear and binding obligations on the Council and the President and are duly reaffirmed in the Manual of Operations of the Special Procedures.³

The text of 8/PRST/2 is not an obscure guideline. Rather, it has been described by international law experts as one of the Council’s core “institution building texts.”⁴

However, for reasons that have never been explained, when substantial information by multiple stakeholders was brought to the attention of the President, concerning cases of persistent non-compliance by Ms. Albanese, he declined to share it with the Council as required by 8/PRST/2. Likewise, the Council failed to fulfil its legal duty to “consider such information and act upon it as appropriate.”

Therefore, given that the extension of the terms in office of a mandate-holder only takes place “in the absence of the above-mentioned information” about persistent non-compliance, the logical conclusion is that no extension has ever taken place.⁵ This situation of non-renewal can be cured by the President and the Council at any time, were he to convey the information to the Council, and were the latter to “consider such information and act upon it as appropriate.”

Below are the objections to re-appointment that were made by governments and parliamentarians,⁶ as well as other condemnations of antisemitism contained in the 56-page dossier submitted by UN Watch and duly received by the President, including.⁷

A. Objections and Condemnations by Governments and Parliamentarians

The United States of America’s Mission to the UN (April 3, 2025): “We condemn [Ms. Albanese’s] virulent antisemitism, which demonizes Israel and supports Hamas. She has clearly violated the UN’s code of conduct and is unfit for her role. Her reappointment would show the @UN tolerates antisemitic hatred and support for terrorism.”⁸

The Netherlands (March 26, 2025): “Several of her social media statements are at odds with the Code of Conduct. The Cabinet disapproves of these expressions. The Cabinet does not support Albanese’s possible reappointment.”⁹

Hungary (April 1, 2025): “...the extension of Special Rapporteur Albanese’s tenure would send a regrettable message to victims, human rights defenders and those committed to credible multilateralism.”¹⁰

Argentina (March 28, 2025): “Argentina supports [Israel’s] concerns... and underlines the importance of the Special Rapporteurs adhering to the provisions of the Code of Conduct...”¹¹

U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee (March 31, 2025): “Ms. Albanese unapologetically uses her position as a UN Special Rapporteur to purvey and attempt to legitimize antisemitic tropes, while serving as a Hamas apologist.”¹²

France (February 11, 2024): “The October 7 massacre is the biggest antisemitic massacre of the 21st century,” and “to deny it is wrong.” It is “scandalous” and “a disgrace” for you [Ms. Albanese] “to appear to justify it, by dragging in the name of the United Nations.”¹³

Germany (February 11, 2024): It is “appalling” for you [Ms. Albanese] “to justify the horrific terror attacks and to “deny their antisemitic nature.” Such remarks are “a disgrace.”¹⁴

Canada (October 24, 2024): “The recent remarks by Francesca Albanese are unacceptable and incompatible with her duty of impartiality, probity and good faith as an independent Special Rapporteur. Antisemitism has no place anywhere.”¹⁵

U.S. (October 16, 2024): “Francesca Albanese's recent remarks, including evoking Nazis, show yet again that she is unfit for any role at the UN.”¹⁶

10 Members of European Parliament (France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Czechia, Slovakia, Bulgaria) (April 3, 2025): “Ms. Albanese’s reappointment to the world’s highest human rights body would be a grave and dangerous mistake.”¹⁷

42 French Parliamentarians (March 28, 2025): Ms. Albanese’s reappointment “would send a regrettable signal to victims, human rights defenders, and states committed to credible multilateralism.”¹⁸

Albania’s former Deputy Prime Minister Genc Pollo (April 1, 2025): “An antisemitic & pro Hamas rapporteur would discredit (further) the UN Human Rights Council. I call on [the Albanian] Government to act accordingly.”¹⁹

Italy’s former Deputy Foreign Minister Guglielmo Picchi (March 31, 2025): “I call on the Italian Government to ask UNHCR president Jurg Lauber to stop the planned reappointment as special rapporteur on human rights in Palestinian territories of Francesca Albanese this Friday, April 4th.”²⁰

German Member of Parliament Daniela Ludwig (April 1, 2025): “Anyone who downplays the Islamist terror by Hamas and wants to legitimize the thousand-fold murder of Jews as democratic resistance is no longer bearable.”²¹

German Member of Parliament Jürgen Hardt (April 1, 2025): “Under Francesca Albanese, her office became an obstacle to the peace process. This failure must not burden Israel and the Palestinians for another term of office.”²²

British Member of Parliament David Taylor (April 1, 2025): “Albanese’s response to the largest antisemitic massacre of the 21st century...in a UN capacity is abhorrent and does so much damage to communities already torn apart by horrific violence, going against everything the United Nations stands for.”²³

Conclusion

We regret that none of the above information was ever conveyed to the Council as required by 8/PRST/2. We remind all officials of the United Nations as well as Member States of the duty to abide by the legal procedures of the United Nations and to respect the rules-based international order.

1 Francesca Albanese falsely claims UNHRC voted on her re-appointment, UN Watch (April 5, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/francesca-albanese-falsely-claims-unhrc-voted-on-her-re-appointment/>.

- 2 Terms of office of special procedure mandate-holders, UN Doc. 8/PRST/2, Human Rights Council (June 18, 2008), https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/E/HRC/p_s/A_HRC_PRST_8_2.pdf.
- 3 Manual of Operations of the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, Human Rights Council (August 2008), https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/SP/Manual_Operations2008.pdf.
- 4 Expertise in the Human Rights Council, Geneva Academy (June 2010), <https://www.geneva-academy.ch/joomlatools-files/docman-files/Expertise%20in%20the%20Human%20Rights%20Council.pdf>.
- 5 UN Watch Letter to Secretary-General Guterres on Termination of Albanese Mandate, UN Watch (April 28, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/notice-to-sg-on-albanese-termination-of-mandate/>; UN Watch Letter to Marco Rubio on Illegality of Re-appointment, UN Watch (April 30, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/30-April-UN-Watch-Letter-to-Sec.-Rubio-on-stripping-immunity-from-Francesca-Albanese.pdf>.
- 6 For the full list of condemnations see Condemnations Against Antisemitic UN Rapporteur Francesca Albanese, UN Watch (April 5, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/condemnations-against-antisemitic-un-rapporteur-francesca-albanese/>.
- 7 UN Watch Triggers Urgent Procedure to Stop Francesca Albanese's U.N. Reappointment, UN Watch (March 27, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/un-watch-triggers-urgent-procedure-to-stop-francesca-albaneses-u-n-reappointment/>.
- 8 @USUN, X (April 3, 2025, 4:39 AM), <https://x.com/USUN/status/1907608952415691079>.
- 9 Parliamentary Questions, House of Representatives of the Netherlands (2024-2025), <https://app.1848.nl/static/pdf/6b/b0/6bb09a112633cd43171eab07bfec3a515046de09.pdf>.
- 10 Letter from Hungary's Permanent Representative in Geneva to the HRC President, Human Rights Council (April 1, 2025), <https://hrcmeetings.ohchr.org/PresidencyBureau/BureauRegionalGroupsCorrespondence/Correspondence/Letter%20from%20the%20Permanent%20Representative%20of%20Hungary%20to%20the%20HRC%20President%20concerning%20the%20Special%20Rapporteur%20on%20the%20situation%20of%20human%20rights%20in%20the%20Palestinian%20territories%20occupied%20since%201967.pdf>.
- 11 Letter from Argentina's Permanent Representative in Geneva to the HRC President, Human Rights Council (March 28, 2025), <https://hrcmeetings.ohchr.org/PresidencyBureau/BureauRegionalGroupsCorrespondence/Correspondence/Note%20verbale%20from%20the%20Permanent%20Mission%20of%20Argentina%20concerning%20the%20Special%20Rapporteur%20on%20the%20situation%20of%20human%20rights%20in%20the%20Palestinian%20territories%20occupied%20since%201967.pdf>.
- 12 Chairman Mast leads GOP in demanding UN reject Francesca Albanese's reappointment, House Foreign Affairs Committee (March 31, 2025), <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/chairman-mast-leads-gop-in-demanding-un-reject-francesca-albaneses-reappointment/>.
- 13 @francediplo, X (February 11, 2024, 12:02 AM), <https://x.com/francediplo/status/1756438502231724104>.
- 14 @GermanyDiplo, X (February 11, 2024, 3:39 PM), <https://x.com/GermanyDiplo/status/1756674368606736529>.
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- 16 @USAmbHRC, X (October 16, 2024, 12:53 AM), <https://x.com/USAmbHRC/status/1846308382510404007>.
- 17 Letter from 10 EU Parliamentarians to HRC President (April 3, 2025), <https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/MEP-Letter-to-HRC-President-Lauber.pdf>.
- 18 Letter from 42 French Parliamentarians to Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, French National Assembly (March 28, 2025), https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Courrier_renouvellement-du-mandat-de-Mme-Francesca-Albanese.pdf.
- 19 @GencPollo, X (April 1, 2025, 12:24 PM), <https://x.com/GencPollo/status/1907001193336889431>.
- 20 @guglielmopicchi, X (March 31, 2025, 10:39 PM), <https://x.com/guglielmopicchi/status/1906793416509604344>.
- 21 Anyone who wants to legitimize the murder of thousands of Jews as resistance is unacceptable, WELT (April 1, 2025), <https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article255828618/Neue-Amtszeit-fuer-Albanese-Wer-tausendfachen-Mord-an-Juden-als-Widerstand-legitimieren-will-ist-nicht-tragbar.html>.

22 Id.

23 Labour MP: No place for Albanese's 'abhorrent' comments on the world stage, The Jewish Chronicle (April 1, 2025), <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/labour-mp-no-place-albanese-antisemitism-ggizs811>.