

The Genocide Accusation Against Israel: Three Critical Aspects

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The accusation since October 7, 2023, that Israel pursues genocide in the Gaza Strip, is a rhetorical weapon of war aimed at the delegitimization and destruction of the Jewish State. Genocide denotes the deliberate destruction of an entire people in whole or in part based on ethnicity, religion, nationality, or race. A genocidal state is anathema, along with those who support it. Fifteen years ago, Columbia anthropologist Mahmood Mamdani, the father of New York's current mayor and no friend of Israel, wrote that genocide is "a label to be stuck on your worst enemy, a perverse version of the Nobel Prize, part of a rhetorical arsenal that helps you vilify your adversaries..."¹ I discuss the genocide accusation from three interlocking angles, the historical, the contemporary ideological, and that of false expertise.

Historical Aspects

Genocide accusations against Israel have a long history. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) came into its own under Yasser Arafat after the Arab defeat in the 1967 Six-Day War. It styled itself as a national liberation movement fighting colonialism. But the PLO was also a conglomeration of terror groups. It rejected UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 1967, which called for a compromise peace between Israel and the Arab states. Israel's destruction was preferable. Although the PLO's attacks on civilians caused fear, they also caused outrage, and they could not destroy Israel. The Israelis also retaliated against PLO bases, mostly in Lebanon. The PLO needed to undermine Israel's right to exist and to legitimize its own terrorism.

The PLO Charter maintained that Israel was colonialist, racist, and fascist. This gained allies in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Founded in 1961, the NAM included Middle Eastern, African, Latin American, and Asian states, most recently liberated from colonial rule. They supported what they called revolutionary violence to overthrow colonial systems. In the 1970s the NAM critiqued colonial remnants, chief among them South African Apartheid and the existence of Israel. The NAM had ideological friends in the communist world, and by 1974 they had a

majority in the United Nations General Assembly.

At the General Assembly's 1974 session the PLO was invited, against all established procedure, to become a participating observer. Lost in the outrage by several delegations was that the genocide charge now became central. The PLO aimed to show that what the West called terror was legitimate resistance, because Israel aimed not to live in peace but to destroy the Palestinians as a group. The Arab states joined in; it cost nothing and the Palestine issue was popular in their countries. Many sub-Saharan African states joined in as well.

In his (in)famous November General Assembly speech, Arafat claimed that the Zionists "see in the Palestinian child, in the Palestinian tree, an enemy that should be exterminated..."² Martyrs lost, he said, were "offered in sacrifice, all in an effort to resist the imminent threat of liquidation..."² PLO political chief Faruq al-Qaddumi, invoked similar rhetoric. "The combat was forced on us," he insisted, because despite appeals for coexistence, "we have been met with death and extermination..." He continued: "We shall not lay down our rifles of revolution. We shall use them to reject death and destruction of our people, who have been exposed to the danger of extermination."³

Many delegations took up this thread. Mauritania attributed to Theodor Herzl and contemporary Israelis

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1. Mahmood Mamdani, "The Politics of Naming: Genocide, Civil War, Insurgency," 29 LONDON REVIEW OF BOOKS (2007).
 2. G.A. Res. A/PV.2282, ¶¶ 50-51, 2282nd Plenary Meeting (Nov. 13, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Sess., 2282nd plenary meeting, ¶¶ 50-51, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2282 (Nov. 13, 1974).
 3. G.A. Res. A/PV.2296, ¶¶ 264-66, 2296th Plenary Meeting (Nov. 22, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Sess., 2296th plenary meeting, ¶¶ 264-266, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2296 (Nov. 22, 1974).

“a demented will to exterminate an entire people.”⁴ Rachid Driss of Tunisia, a former ambassador to the U.S., argued that the Palestinians “have had no choice but ... to defend themselves against a vast enterprise designed to liquidate them as a nation.”⁵ Abdirizak Haji Hussein of Somalia, a former prime minister, said that the Palestinian choices “are armed struggle or obliteration.”⁶ Cuba insisted that Zionism was “an unparalleled form of aggression verging on genocide,” because it aimed “to annihilate [the Palestinian nation] ... to wipe it off the map and erase it from history.”⁷

Genocide accusations at the UN exploded with Israel’s war in Lebanon, launched in June 1982. Israel’s achievable aim was to destroy PLO military infrastructure in southern Lebanon. Its less achievable aim was regime change in Beirut. The Israelis deployed artillery, air power, and a siege of Beirut from late June to mid-August when a U.S. brokered cease-fire provided passage for the PLO to Tunisia. No genocide took place, but the accusation became a form of warfare undertaken from the inability of the PLO’s sympathizers to help materially.

The Soviet Union had been embroiled in Afghanistan since 1979, and the extensive caches of PLO weapons previously imported from Eastern Europe and uncovered by the Israelis were an embarrassment. Arab populations sympathized with the Palestinians. But Jordan had forcibly expelled the PLO in 1970-71, Egypt had just implemented its 1979 peace agreement with Israel, and Israel chased Syrian jets from Lebanon’s Beqaa Valley five days into the war, inducing Syria to sign a cease-fire.

There were many examples of antisemitic tropes in the accusations. The Qataris claimed that Israeli troops were motivated by “their thirst for Arab blood, be it the blood of a child, a woman, or an old person,” as they were “seeking the so-called security of the ‘chosen people,’ as they so arrogantly state.”⁸ The Cuban delegation warned that “these are not the times in which the world can be deceived by well-orchestrated press campaigns... The plain truth is that Israel intends to commit genocide against the Palestinian people.”⁹ The United Arab Emirates added that “There is a Zionist group which dominates the [U.S.] capital and mass media and exercises its influence on the elections of the executive and legislative authorities in the United States of America.”¹⁰

Post-Cold War, the PLO continued genocide accusations. Nabil Ramlawi, the PLO’s representative with the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, accused the Israelis of killing unborn children by poisoning Palestinian schoolgirls in the West Bank to render them barren. He claimed that during the first

intifada the Israelis had forced 4,000 abortions on Palestinian women.¹¹ And in March 1997, he accused the Israelis of having injected hundreds of Palestinian children with the HIV virus as part of a genocidal campaign.¹²

Contemporary Ideological Aspects

The early PLO charges set a pattern. First, they were utterly unbound by any facts. Accusers avoided lining up Israeli military actions with the UN Genocide Convention. Allegations regarding Palestinian births were cut from whole cloth. Genocide accusations legitimized terror as self-defense, delegitimized Israeli responses, and questioned Israel’s existence as racist and colonial.

4. G.A. Res. A/PV.2285, ¶ 19-33, 2286th Plenary Meeting (Nov. 14, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Session, 2285th plenary meeting, ¶¶ 19-33, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2285 (Nov. 14, 1974).
5. G.A. Res. A/PV.2267, ¶ 71-4, 2267th Plenary Meeting (Oct. 14, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Session, 2267th plenary meeting, ¶¶ 71-74, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2267 (Oct. 14, 1974).
6. G.A. Res. A/PV.2268, ¶ 61, 2268th Plenary Meeting (Oct. 14, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Session, 2268th plenary meeting, ¶¶ 61, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2268 (Oct. 14, 1974).
7. G.A. Res. A/PV.2295, ¶ 109-27, 2295th Plenary Meeting (Nov. 21, 1974). UN GAOR, 29th Session, 2295th plenary meeting, ¶¶ 109-127, U.N. Doc. A/PV.2295 (Nov. 21, 1974).
8. G.A. Res. A/ES-7/PV. 22, 22-25, 27, Special Emergency Session (June 25, 1982). UN GAOR, 7th Emergency Special Session, 22nd meeting, ¶¶ 22-25, 27, U.N. Doc. A/ES-7/PV.22 (June 25, 1982).
9. G.A. Res. A/ES-7/PV. 25, 46, Special Emergency Session (Aug. 16, 1982). UN GAOR, 7th Emergency Special Session, 25th meeting, ¶ 46, U.N. Doc. A/ES-7/PV.25 (Aug. 16, 1982).
10. G.A. Res. A/ES-7/PV.27, 13-15, Special Emergency Session (Aug. 21, 1982). UN GAOR, 7th Emergency Special Session, 27th Meeting, ¶¶ 13-15, UN Doc. A/ES-7/PV.27 (Aug. 21, 1982).
11. UN Doc. A/38/365/S/15939, Permanent Representative of Israel (Blum) to Secretary-General (Aug. 25, 1983); UN Doc. E/CN.4/1990/59, Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights (Sept. 18, 1989).
12. UNCHR, 53rd Session, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1997/3 (March 11, 1997).

They also used well-worn antisemitic tropes regarding everything from blood to government manipulation.

Today's genocide charges against Israel use earlier inversions of reality and antisemitic tropes, but they also lean on settler colonial theory, which expanded in the academic world in the 2000s. The theory holds that settler colonialism is different from mercantile colonialism, which seeks raw materials or markets. It is characterized by mass settlement over the long term that invariably exterminates indigenous peoples. Scholars of settler colonialism believe that only westerners are settler colonialists, and so they study Canada, the U.S., and Australia.

But they have particular ire for Israel. They hold that the Jewish connection to the land is a Zionist fabrication. They also hold that Israel weaponizes the Holocaust, which for settler colonial theorists deliberately obscures colonial genocides, in order to attack its enemies. Finally, they imagine that settler colonialism in Israel can be reversed, because millions of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Jordan, and elsewhere are ready to return and have an inalienable right to do so. These ideological claims ignore all historical developments that conflict with the theory, such as various Zionist attempts to reach accommodation. But settler colonial theorists also reject a two-state solution because a surviving Jewish state would still normalize settler colonialism.

In the meantime, the study of settler colonialism has redefined genocide to sidestep the UN Genocide Convention. Genocide here is not a defined crime with special criminal intent and certain criminal acts, so much as it is a societal structure that unfolds over the long term. The Gaza war is thus the final stage of a decades-long genocidal process. Arguments concerning Israeli self-defense, the atrocities of October 7, the aim of destroying Hamas, the problems of fighting in an urban landscape against an underground enemy – are all waved aside.

Thus, genocide accusations against Israel since October 2023 have been muddled. It is considered a given that Israel is committing genocide; this is what settler-colonial societies do. But the facts must be shoehorned into the theory because the UN Genocide Convention, approved unanimously by the General Assembly in 1948, has been unchanged since that date. To ignore the Convention is to ignore international law. This, of course, is what anti-Zionists have long accused Israel of doing, and many hope to see Israeli leaders in the dock of the International Criminal Court one day.

Thus, ever since the Hamas attacks, we have been told

the following by pro-Palestine news outlets like *Aljazeera* and *The Electronic Intifada* and human rights NGOs like Amnesty International and al-Haq: Hamas was engaged in resistance on October 7. Tales of Hamas rapes, beheadings, and other depravities are Zionist fabrications. Israeli leaders engaged in genocidal speech after October 7. Civilian fatalities could number in the hundreds of thousands, none are combatants, and most are women and children. The Israelis, we are told, even attacked a major fertility clinic to kill thousands more unborn children.

We have also been told that the Israelis send Palestinian civilians to humanitarian zones, removing them from combat in order to kill them. We have been told that the Israelis have deliberately starved the Gazan population. We have been told that the Israelis have destroyed hospitals, schools, and apartment buildings not because they are used by Hamas, but to create a landscape that cannot support life. We are told that Hamas does not use civilians as human shields. And finally, we are told that Israel and its allies are all part of a global deception that weaponizes charges of antisemitism to blunt the reality of these horrors.

Indeed, the war in Gaza has been a horror. Wars fought in urban spaces against adversaries who deploy guerrilla tactics and refuse to surrender are always horrible. There are many historical guides from Stalingrad (1943), Manila (1945), Mosul (2016-17), and Khartoum (2023-25). States committing genocide do not warn civilians to get out of harm's way; they do not allow the import of hundreds of thousands of tons of humanitarian aid; and they do not primarily target weapons systems like rocket launchers and underground smuggling routes.

False Expertise

This brings us to the issue of false expertise. Before winning New York's mayoral election in November 2025, Zohran Mamdani noted that his accusation of genocide against Israel was not "my own individual assessment," but rather a "reflection of leading genocide scholars from across the world."¹³ Many others make tactical use of experts. In May 2025 social media provocateur Mehdi Hasan announced to his 1.7 million X followers that "Genocide experts are almost all in agreement that what's

13. 1010wins (@1010Wins) and Susan Richard (@thesusanrichard), INSTAGRAM (Oct. 9, 2025), available at <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DPmQpPkD5PQ/>

happening [in Gaza] is a genocide.” The experts, Hasan says, help right-thinking people to “avoid being gaslit by apologists for Israel.”¹⁴ Even Pope Frances in November 2024 said that “According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of a genocide.”¹⁵

Some of the experts are truly experts, such as William Schabas, who has written the critical book on genocide case law.¹⁶ With them one can respectfully disagree. Others are simply activists posing as experts. Ten days after the October 2023 attack, over 800 scholars claiming expertise in “international law, conflict studies, and genocide studies,” issued a statement concerning “the crime of genocide” in Gaza. The signatories included scholars of medieval art, “racial” capitalism, veterinary medicine, chemical engineering, IT business administration, Chilean street art, forests in India, Kurdish feminism, classics, linguistics, Irish philosophy, and performance theory, plus nearly 40 graduate students.¹⁷

Others simply fake consensus. In August 2025 the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) issued a resolution to the effect that Israel’s “policies and actions meet the legal definition of genocide” per the UN Genocide Convention, and that international courts should act accordingly.¹⁸ The statement, which made global headlines, represented itself as having the entire association’s agreement. In fact, less than 30% of the membership participated in a rushed online poll, with no discussion allowed beforehand.¹⁹ Discussion might have been useful; the resolution contained numerous factual errors.²⁰

The most important person claiming expertise is Francesca Albanese, since 2022 the UN Special Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967. She has become the face of the genocide accusation against Israel. But she is also the face of ideology posing as expertise. Albanese’s credentials are exaggerated. Though she has neither practiced law nor taken the exams that would allow her to do so, she claims to be an “international lawyer.” She earned a master’s degree in law from the University of London’s School of Oriental and Asiatic Studies (SOAS). This program adopts a postcolonial approach to international law. In 2024, Albanese thanked SOAS faculty for providing her “with the foundational knowledge to comprehend the original sin of international law and its use as a tool of colonization and imperialism.”²¹

As of this writing Albanese has submitted three reports concerning Israel since October 7 to the UN Human Rights Commission, the most important of which is

“Anatomy of a Genocide,” completed in March 2024 and submitted in final form in July. It proceeds from settler colonial theory. “Erasing the Indigenous Arab presence,” she argues, “has been an inevitable part of the forming of Israel as a ‘Jewish State.’”²² October 7 was a pretext for the final genocidal steps. But again, facts had to fit theory. Albanese accordingly used a flawed evidentiary basis. For fatalities, she employed the “impact snapshots” from the UN’s Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which in turn relied on statistics from the Gaza Ministry of Health and the Gaza Government Office of Information, Hamas’s propaganda office. Albanese thus argued that 70% of Gaza’s fatalities had been women and children to allege a genocidal

14. Mehdi Hasan (@mehdirhasan), X (May 23, 2025), available at <https://x.com/mehdirhasan/status/1925997390810464666>

15. Giada Zampano, “Pope Frances Calls for Investigation to Determine if Israel’s Attacks in Gaza Constitute Genocide,” AP (Nov. 17, 2024), available at <https://apnews.com/article/pope-vatican-gaza-israel-genocide-book-62907898cead13dbcf603592263904c>

16. William A. Schabas, *GENOCIDE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: THE CRIME OF CRIMES* (3rd ed. 2025).

17. “Scholars Warn of Potential Genocide in Gaza,” TWAILR (Oct. 17, 2023), available at <https://twailr.com/public-statement-scholars-warn-of-potential-genocide-in-gaza/>

18. “IAGS Resolution on the Situation in Gaza,” IAGS (Aug. 31, 2025), available at <https://genocidescholars.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/IAGS-Resolution-on-Gaza-FINAL.pdf>

19. “Another Reason Not to Trust the ‘Experts,’” THE FREE PRESS (Sept. 3, 2025), available at <https://www.thefp.com/p/another-reason-not-to-trust-the-experts>; Sara E. Brown, “I Joined the Genocide Scholars to Prevent Atrocities: Here’s How They Failed,” AJC (Sept. 26, 2025), available at <https://www.ajc.org/news/i-joined-the-genocide-scholars-to-prevent-atrocities-heres-how-they-failed>

20. Robert Satloff, “A Charade in Academic Garb,” WASHINGTON INSTITUTE (Sept. 2, 2025), available at <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/charade-academic-garb>

21. SOAS University of London, “Imperialism, Colonialism and Human Rights: The Litmus Test of Palestine,” 16:11 YOUTUBE (Nov. 20, 2022), available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v9_mzAzWnXA

22. “Anatomy of a Genocide,” UN Doc. A/HRC/55/73, ¶¶ 2, 10, 97(d) (March 25, 2024).

pattern. This figure was found to be wildly false, and in May 2024 OCHA quietly dropped it.²³ Still, the figure remained in Albanese's final draft.²⁴ She cited the figure in public lectures thereafter.²⁵

"Anatomy" further claimed that Israel deployed "deliberate starvation" in Gaza, "especially among children." How one targets children for starvation in war zones is unclear, but the larger point is that Albanese willfully ignored numerous developments. The World Food Programme, the largest organization fighting global hunger, was active in Gaza from the start. In February 2024, its chief executive officer, Carl Skau, reported to the UN Security Council that while more food trucks crossing into Gaza were desirable, the main problem was the safety of convoys moving from the Rafah and Kerem Shalom crossings in southern Gaza to Gaza City in the north through combat zones and a breakdown of civil order.²⁶ Skau would not say so openly, but the Israelis had begun escorting convoys while coordinating routes.²⁷ In May, the Israelis responded to other WFP requests. They opened two truck crossings in northern Gaza where none had existed before, and they began to allow humanitarian deliveries to the Ashdod port, sixteen miles from Gaza.²⁸

Readers of Albanese's "Anatomy" report would not have known that the World Food Programme existed. Nor did Albanese mention that between March and July 2024, more than 23,000 trucks entered Gaza carrying nearly 400,000 tons of food, medical supplies, shelter equipment, and so on.²⁹ Instead Albanese cited Michael Fakri, the UN special rapporteur for the right to food and a fellow UN expert charging genocide. In March 2024, Fakri claimed in the anti-Zionist platform *Mondoweiss* that "It's hard to determine ... how many people are actually dying from malnutrition and disease and hunger versus bombs and bullets," and that "we've never seen a civilian population made to go so hungry so completely and so quickly. Never in modern history."³⁰

Fakri's ignorance of modern history aside, it was not hard to distinguish war fatalities from those related to malnutrition. Albanese reported, based on figures from the Gaza Ministry of Health, that Gaza had suffered more than 30,000 fatalities. These figures were in themselves problematic, as they did not distinguish combatants. But even according to the Gaza Ministry of Health, 27 children died of malnutrition related illnesses by March 21, 2024, a figure Albanese did not include.³¹ The number is tragic, but it does not support Fakri's assessment.

Albanese's press conference on March 27, 2024, demonstrated her antisemitism.³² Back in 2014, she railed

about dominant Jewish lobbies controlling the U.S. government. Now she said that she had received threats from what one reporter called "certain people." When

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23. OCHA, "Reported impact snapshot, Gaza Strip" (May 31, 2024), available at <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/reported-impact-snapshot-gaza-strip-31-may-2024>; Elliot Abrams, "UN Halves its Estimate of Women and Children Killed in Gaza," CFR (May 12, 2024), available at <https://www.cfr.org/blog/un-halves-its-estimate-women-and-children-killed-gaza>
 24. *Supra* note 22, at ¶ 25.
 25. *Supra* note 21, at 21:49.
 26. Sec. Res. S/PV. 9560 at 5-6, 9560th Meeting (Feb. 27, 2024).
 27. "Fergal Keane: Aid Convoy Tragedy Shows Fear of Starvation Haunts Gaza," BBC (March 2, 2024), available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68456718>; Louis Imbert, et al., "Á Gaza, une distribution alimentaire vire à la tragédie: ce que l'on sait sur le convoi humanitaire et les tirs de l'armée israélienne," LE MONDE (March 1, 2024), available at https://www.lemonde.fr/international/article/2024/03/01/ guerre-israel-hamas-a-gaza-une-emeute-de-la-faim-et-des-tirs-israeliens_6219440_3210.html
 28. Michael Bachner et al., "Israel Opens Erez Crossing to Gaza Aid for First Time as Blinken Tours Border," TIMES OF ISRAEL (May 1, 2024), available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-opens-erez-crossing-to-gaza-aid-for-first-time-as-blinken-tours-border/>; Seth Frantzman, "Israel Opens Another Crossing for Aid to Enter Northern Gaza," FDD (May 13, 2024) available at https://www.fdd.org/analysis/op_ed/2024/05/13/israel-opens-another-crossing-for-aid-to-enter-northern-gaza/
 29. Calculations provided by COGAT are available at <https://govextra.gov.il/cogat/humanitarian-efforts/main/>
 30. *Supra* note 22, at ¶¶ 22, 40, 41; David Katterburg, "UN Expert: Israel is Engineering Famine in Gaza," MONDOWEISS (March 11, 2024), available at <https://mondoweiss.net/2024/03/un-expert-israel-is-engineering-famine-in-gaza/>
 31. Press Release, "Gaza: Halt the War Now to Save Children from Dying of Imminent Famine, UN Committee Warns," OHCHR (March 21, 2024), available at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/03/gaza-halt-war-now-save-children-dying-imminent-famine-un-committee-warns>
 32. UN Human Rights Council, "Q&A with Francesca Albanese, Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territory," YOUTUBE (March 27, 2024), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8512p-80wI>

asked about the well-documented Hamas rapes of Israeli women on October 7, Albanese said “I didn’t find any convincing evidence.” She was, meanwhile, “disturbed by the weaponization of anything that ... happened on the 7th of October.” She commented that she found no evidence “that ... the crimes that were committed against Israelis on the 7th of October were ... propelled by antisemitism.” This assertion, which blamed colonialism instead, ignored Hamas’s long obsession with the Jews in addition to phone calls from October 7 in which Hamas killers boasted, to parents no less, about killing Jews with their bare hands.³³

Albanese evidently hoped to impress the legal community with what she called “one of my key findings.”³⁴ It was not a finding so much as an allegation that Israel deployed something Albanese called “humanitarian camouflage.” The “Anatomy” report mentioned it. Then, with law professors Luigi Daniele and Nicola Perugini, Albanese published a 35-page booklet *Humanitarian Camouflage: Israel Rewrites the Laws of War to Legitimize Genocide in Gaza* in October 2024.³⁵ The authors unveiled what they called an “unprecedented” global deception on Israel’s part. By using evacuation warnings, civilian safe zones, and references to Hamas’s use of human shields in urban areas (which Albanese denied ever occurred), Israel hid genocide beneath alleged adherence to the Geneva Conventions. This breathtaking theory made every Israeli action part of a genocide. *Humanitarian Camouflage* also recalled antisemitic tropes of mass world deception in the service of evil.

In numerous speaking engagements at leading universities in 2024 and 2025, Albanese became the legal expert, displacing for many the International Court of Justice. Her hosts at Princeton University hailed her as a “leading international lawyer.”³⁶ Her hosts at Erasmus University Rotterdam said that her work was “meticulously grounded in international law and empirical evidence.”³⁷ SOAS did not profess academic objectivity. They claimed to “stand in solidarity with Rapporteur Albanese in the face of attempts to silence her powerful and courageous voice.” She answered “smears, slurs, [and] accusations of antisemitism,” they said, with “vigor and moral clarity.”³⁸

In university and other settings, Albanese receives more than just a polite welcome. The lecture hall at University of Toronto, bedecked in Palestinian flags, gave her a rapturous standing ovation when she entered on November 7, 2024.³⁹ Such acclaim is unprecedented for a UN official, and the joy exuded for a speaker discussing the solemn

topic of genocide is truly strange. One must explain it beyond a *Der Spiegel* article noting that Albanese “wears her nails painted red” and has “fine facial features.”⁴⁰ Mehdi Hasan’s platform, *Zeteo*, focuses on her use of social media, describing Albanese “an internet idol to her many admirers who study and share her press conferences and viral diplomatic interventions... Wherever she goes, she seems to become ... the epicenter of attention...”⁴¹

33. Avraham Russell Shalev, “Hamas’ October 7 Genocide: Legal Analysis and the Weaponization of Reverse Accusations – A Study in Modern Genocide Recognition and Denial,” 58(2-3) ISRAEL LAW REVIEW 343-382(2025).

34. UN Human Rights Council, “Francesca Albanese Alleges Israeli Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza,” YOUTUBE (March 26, 2024), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3XrwNGWF108>

35. Luigi Daniele, Nicola Perugini, Francesca Albanese, HUMANITARIAN CAMOUFLAGE: ISRAEL REWRITES THE LAWS OF WAR TO LEGITIMIZE GENOCIDE IN GAZA. CURRENT ISSUES IN DEPTH (Institute for Palestine Studies 2024).

36. “Dean’s Leadership Series – Francesca Albanese, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories,” SPIA (Oct. 30, 2024), available at <https://spia.princeton.edu/events/deans-leadership-series-francesca-albanese-united-nations-special-rapporteur-occupied>

37. International Institute of Social Studies, “Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories | Francesca Albanese at Erasmus University Rotterdam,” YOUTUBE at 7:57 (Feb. 14, 2025), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtLk3BR9V50>

38. *Supra* note 21, at 6:17.

39. On the Line Media, “Francesca Albanese at the University of Toronto,” YOUTUBE (Nov. 7, 2024), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEqpNeEIdNw>

40. Nicola Abé, “UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese is Both Hated and Loved,” DER SPIEGEL (Aug. 8, 2025), available at <https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/the-human-rights-populist-un-special-rapporteur-francesca-albanese-is-both-hated-and-loved-a-2f58c348-2621-413a-9d42-3f03724a556e>

41. Fatima Bhutto, “We Cannot be Clock-Worked into Acceptance of this Brutal Violence,” ZETEO (Jan. 26, 2025), available at <https://zeteo.com/p/francesca-albanese-profile-chronicling-gaza-genocide>

Hamid Dabashi, a professor of Iranian literature at Columbia University, published the following tribute to Albanese, which reflects thousands of comments on social media: “She is the voice of the global conscience speaking truth to the vulgar warmongers... [Her] bold, brilliant, and thoroughly researched report ... has inspired much admiration around the globe... but also horror and fury among Zionists who do not want Israel’s genocide in Palestine to have such an eloquent, precise and detailed account.” She was, Dabashi said, taking on “genocidal Zionists” as well as those “fooled and deluded by the Israel lobby in the US, and by western media propaganda.”⁴² Dabashi grasps the baton of Albanese’s earlier antisemitic remarks and uses them to bolster her faux expertise.

In truthful moments, Albanese reveals the strategy. She seeks not to defend international law, but to rewrite it while seizing control of its levers. “We cannot blame international law” for its shortcomings, she said, “because it’s colonial.” She continued that international law was like “a car, and in order to make it start ... we need a key [and] the key is political will.... Many governments do not represent the will of ... many of their citizens.... [The] key is not in the right hands, so we need to get hold of the key.”⁴³

The “key,” is the genocide accusation itself, whether evidence supports it or not. Israel is a settler colonial genocidal state. It is necessarily guilty. As for the evidence, Albanese told her Princeton audience that “It doesn’t really matter whether a court has finished

investigating.”⁴⁴ Or as she beamed at Erasmus, “Never before [have I] heard so much talking about settler colonialism” on the part of students. “Israel cannot run away,” she said, “without the sticker on [its] back of an apartheid state which has committed genocide.”⁴⁵ It is the sticker, which would never come off, that matters.

In this way Albanese and other “experts” have circled back to the genocide accusations leveled by the PLO in the 1970s and 1980s. Accusers at that time never dreamt that Israeli leaders would be found guilty in a court. The International Criminal Court did not even exist at the time. In essence, the PLO foreshadowed Mahmoud Mamdani’s statement to the effect that the accusation alone is what mattered. And as Francesca Albanese confirms, the real aim of the genocide accusation is to permanently destroy the legitimacy of the Jewish State.■

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42. Hamid Dabashi, “War on Gaza: Who’s Afraid of Francesca Albanese?” MIDDLE EAST EYE (April 10, 2024), available at <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/war-gaza-whos-afraid-francesca-albanese>

43. *Supra* note 37, at 32:30 and 101:13.

44. *Supra* note 36, at 10:18.

45. *Supra* note 37, at 38:54.