UN official denies seeing 'a shred of evidence' showing staff in Gaza held hostages

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The [United Nations](https://archive.vn/o/WZdwC/https%3A/www.foxnews.com/category/world/united-nations)' top humanitarian aid official told Fox News Digital he has ‘not seen a shred of evidence’ of the U.N.’s involvement, either through the use of its facilities or its staff, in the holding of hostages in Gaza.

When asked about former Hamas hostages’ claims that they were held in U.N. facilities or by U.N. staff, Tom Fletcher, under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), denied seeing any evidence of the claims.

‘I have not seen a shred of evidence so far, and I have asked for it, that suggests that U.N. – that there was any U.N. acquiescence in there or involvement in using U.N. buildings or U.N. staff being involved in holding those hostages,’ Fletcher said during a news conference.

He also said that ‘if we get evidence of a U.N. worker involved in an act of terrorism or hostage-taking, yes of course we’re going to investigate.’ Fletcher offered to lead the investigation himself.

Emily Damari, a former Hamas hostage who was released in the most recent ceasefire deal, alleged she was held at a United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) facility while in captivity. Damari, who holds British and Israeli citizenships, told British Prime Minister Keir Starmer that she was denied proper medical care while being held at an UNRWA school.

Fletcher said the facility was ‘a shelter that had been used by the U.N. before we were bombed out of it by the Israelis.’ He acknowledged that Hamas may have then used the facility, but said it was when the U.N. was not ‘there to stop them from doing that.’

In a statement to Fox News Digital, Israeli U.N. Ambassador [Danny Danon](https://archive.vn/o/WZdwC/https%3A/www.foxnews.com/person/d/danny-danon) called on the U.N. to investigate ‘these very serious claims.’

‘We believe the testimonies of the Israeli hostages who went through hell in [Hamas captivity](https://archive.vn/o/WZdwC/https%3A/www.foxnews.com/world/former-hamas-hostage-briefs-un-security-council-pure-hell-captivity-gaza). Rather than dedicating ample resources and efforts to demonizing Israel, the U.N. should be thoroughly investigating these very serious claims about U.N. complicity in depraved Hamas terrorism,’ Danon said in the statement.

Anne Bayefsky, director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust and president of Human Rights Voices, slammed the U.N. over its ‘singular pattern of behavior when confronted with the truth about UNRWA and the involvement of U.N. actors in terrorism against Jews: deny, deflect and carry on.’

‘Israel has presented mountains of evidence of UNRWA's participation in the Oct. 7 atrocities, and its ongoing attempts to save Hamas – which the U.N. denies is a terrorist organization,’ Bayefsky added. ‘The ‘see no evil, hear no evil response’ – again – in the face of this gut-wrenching information from a hostage is quite simply, despicable.’

Bayefsky said that ‘as far as the U.N. misinformation machine is concerned, the evidence is never enough.’

While Fletcher says he has not seen ‘a shred of evidence,’ the U.N. Office of Oversight Services (OIOS), which reviewed [Israel’s claims](https://archive.vn/o/WZdwC/https%3A/www.foxnews.com/world/israel-says-hamas-sent-toddler-military-outpost), said, ‘UNRWA staff members may have been involved in the 7 October attacks.’

The OIOS examined evidence of U.N. workers’ involvement in the attacks and found there was ‘insufficient’ evidence of nine workers taking part in the massacre. However, it did not completely discount the possibility. In fact, UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini issued a statement on the probe and determined that the employees in question ‘cannot work for UNRWA.’

Fox News reached out to a representative for Damari's family, but did not receive a response to what Fletcher said.