Anti-Israel UN investigator keeps her job despite push for removal by US, EU lawmakers

April 4, 2025

By Luke Tress

The Times of Israel

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/anti-israel-un-investigator-keeps-mandate-despite-push-for-removal-by-us-eu-lawmakers/>

Francesca Albanese, a UN investigator into Israel with a history of antisemitism and vitriol against the Jewish state, can remain in office until 2028 despite efforts by US and European lawmakers and Jewish groups to dislodge her, a session of the UN Human Rights Council confirmed on Friday.

The UNHRC did not address any of the complaints during the meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, meaning Albanese can continue in office until 2028.

Albanese, the UN special rapporteur for the occupied Palestinian territories, has been condemned by [Jewish groups](https://www.ajc.org/news/ajc-letter-to-un-members-on-francesca-albanese-serving-as-special-rapporteur-on-human-rights), [Israel](https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-blasts-unfit-lawyer-tapped-to-head-un-probe-into-treatment-of-palestinians/), the [US](https://twitter.com/StateSEAS/status/1603160247417405441?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1603160247417405441%7Ctwgr%5E3478f68c9da8141ddd4f95aadcf7ced20f4c88b9%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Funwatch.org%2Fun-watch-triggers-urgent-procedure-to-stop-francesca-albaneses-u-n-reappointment%2F), [Canada](https://twitter.com/CanadaGeneva/status/1849444070021538229?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1849444070021538229%7Ctwgr%5E3478f68c9da8141ddd4f95aadcf7ced20f4c88b9%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Funwatch.org%2Fun-watch-triggers-urgent-procedure-to-stop-francesca-albaneses-u-n-reappointment%2F), [France](https://x.com/francediplo/status/1756438502231724104), [Germany](https://x.com/GermanyDiplo/status/1756674368606736529) and others.

Lawmakers in the [US](https://x.com/HouseForeignGOP/status/1906860150381511167), [France](https://unwatch.org/42-french-parliamentarians-oppose-renewal-of-francesca-albanese/), [the UK](https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/labour-mp-no-place-albanese-antisemitism-ggizs81l) and the [Netherlands](https://x.com/HillelNeuer/status/1904880946534379533), and leading [US Jewish groups,](https://x.com/AJCGlobal/status/1906810307835462068) came out against her appointment in recent weeks.

Albanese’s opponents argue her conduct should disqualify her from the position, which the UNHRC says requires impartiality, integrity and objectivity. Albanese has called the criticism a smear campaign, and her supporters view her as an outspoken champion for the Palestinians.

Albanese, an Italian lawyer, is a scholar at Georgetown University and a former staffer for the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for the Palestinians, which has itself been accused by Israel of pushing anti-Israeli narratives and harboring terror operatives as employees.

She was appointed to her UNHRC post in April 2022. Her opponents issued a raft of complaints against her ahead of a UNHRC session on Friday scheduled to approve rapporteurs, who are mostly appointed to three-year terms.

After the complaints, the UNHRC said Albanese is in a minority of rapporteurs who hold a country-specific mandate instead of a ‘thematic’ mandate. Both groups are limited to six years in office, but while the tenure of thematic mandate-holders is separated into two three-year terms, there is no such provision for country mandates, a spokesperson said.

‘She can serve as Special Rapporteur until 30 April 2028,’ a spokesperson for the UNHRC told The Times of Israel.

UN provisions say the president of the Human Rights Council must convey information to the council about mandate-holders’ non-compliance with UN regulations that are brought to his attention by states or a coordination committee, especially ahead of the renewal of mandate-holders. Those regulations require the investigators to act with impartiality.

The UN’s coordination committee for special procedures dismissed complaints against Albanese late last month, according to a [document](https://unwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Letter-from-Coordination-Committee-on-Albanese.pdf) shared by UN Watch, a nonprofit campaigning against Albanese that lodged complaints against her with the UNHRC. There were no discussions of her position during the Friday session, and other rapporteurs were approved without any debate.

Albanese’s critics lashed the UNHRC for dismissing the complaints against her on Friday.

‘The renewal of Francesca Albanese’s mandate is a disgrace and a moral stain on the United Nations,’ said Danny Danon, Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations. ‘Albanese is a notorious antisemite who has repeatedly expressed not only biased views against Israel, but also hateful rhetoric targeting the Jewish people as a whole.’

Anne Bayefsky, the director of New York’s Touro Institute on Human Rights and the president of the Human Rights Voices advocacy group, called on the US to cease funding to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

‘Today, the UN Human Rights Council exposed the dark side of its anti-Israel and anti-Jewish operation for the world to see,’ she said. ‘The 47 members could have removed her — consistent with the UN’s declared principles and rules — and yet not one state made a peep, including EU states like Germany.’

Albanese has said that [the ’Jewish lobby’ controls the US](https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-palestinian-rights-officials-social-media-history-reveals-antisemitic-comments/), repeatedly compared Israelis to Nazis, [rejected antisemitic motivations](https://x.com/FranceskAlbs/status/1756351236909965591) for Hamas’s October 7 attack on Israel, [blamed Israel](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/un-special-rapporteur-for-palestinians-banned-from-israel-after-appearing-to-justify-oct-7-massacre/) for the invasion, rejected Israeli security concerns, condemned Israel’s killing of Hamas terror chief Yahya Sinwar, and [denied](https://www.aljazeera.com/program/newsfeed/2023/11/15/un-special-rapporteur-israel-cant-claim-right-of-self-defence) Israel’s right to self defense, among other inflammatory statements.

US officials, under both the [Biden](https://twitter.com/USAmbUN/status/1851354441212928375?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1851354441212928375%7Ctwgr%5E3478f68c9da8141ddd4f95aadcf7ced20f4c88b9%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Funwatch.org%2Fun-watch-triggers-urgent-procedure-to-stop-francesca-albaneses-u-n-reappointment%2F) and Trump administrations, have said she is unfit for her role. The US mission to the UN on Wednesday [said](https://x.com/USUN/status/1907608952415691079) it had sent a letter to United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres arguing against Albanese’s tenure. The House Foreign Affairs Committee last week [demanded](https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/chairman-mast-leads-gop-in-demanding-un-reject-francesca-albaneses-reappointment/) that the Human Rights Council reject her appointment. The former US antisemitism envoy, Deborah Lipstadt, has [called](https://www.timesofisrael.com/appalled-us-israel-jewish-groups-slam-un-official-for-past-antisemitic-rhetoric/) Albanese’s conduct [antisemitic](https://twitter.com/USAmbUN/status/1851354441212928375?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1851354441212928375%7Ctwgr%5E3478f68c9da8141ddd4f95aadcf7ced20f4c88b9%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Funwatch.org%2Fun-watch-triggers-urgent-procedure-to-stop-francesca-albaneses-u-n-reappointment%2F) and ‘unacceptable,’ and [said](https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/un-chief-called-special-rapporteur-for-the-palestinians-a-horrible-person-us-antisemitism-envoy-says/) that Guterres once called Albanese a ‘horrible person.’ The General Assembly oversees the UNHRC and its budget.

The US is the lead donor to the UN’s Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which oversees Albanese’s office, contributing more than $36 million last year.

Albanese’s latest [report](https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/55/73), titled ‘Anatomy of a Genocide,’ accused Israel of carrying out a ‘long-standing settler colonial process of erasure’ and did not include any investigation into Hamas.

Israel’s advocates argue that Albanese’s position is part of a broader anti-Israel bias at the UN. In addition to Albanese’s mandate, a separate open-ended commission of inquiry at the UNHRC is dedicated to investigating Israel. That commission is also harshly critical of Israel, and one of its members has made [antisemitic statements](https://www.timesofisrael.com/member-of-un-gaza-probe-apologizes-for-jewish-lobby-remark-slammed-as-antisemitic/). Both the [General Assembly](https://unwatch.org/2024-unga-resolutions-on-israel-vs-rest-of-the-world/) and the [UNHRC](https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/unhrc?item=QuJOSXXJH1rarfpaBqXmR) condemn Israel more than any other country.