UN envoy for sexual violence under fire for no-show at meeting on Hamas’ hostages held in Gaza

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<https://www.foxnews.com/world/un-envoy-sexual-violence-under-fire-no-show-meeting-hamas-hostages-held-gaza>

A leading expert of [the United Nations](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/united-nations) blasted the world body for failing to have its lead official on sexual violence in conflict address Security Council members at a meeting to discuss the hostages held by Hamas terrorists in Gaza on Thursday.

Anne Bayefsky, director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, and president of Human Rights Voices, told Fox News Digital that ‘It is astonishing that the U.N. cannot come up with a single official prepared to address even an unofficial Security Council meeting and attest to mass sexual atrocities done by Palestinians to Jews.’

According to a Tuesday report in the Times of Israel, Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Pramila Patten withdrew from a slated appearance before the informal Security Council meeting about the sexual crimes committed against hostages taken by Hamas on Oct. 7.

The planned Thursday session is titled ‘Condemning hostage-taking in Israel on October 7 as a psychological tool of terrorism.’

According to [the Times of Israel](https://www.timesofisrael.com/un-sexual-violence-envoy-pulls-out-of-security-council-briefing-on-hamas-hostages/), a diplomat suggested that the ‘decision was politically motivated, as her office has faced pressure not to be seen as prioritizing the plight of the Israeli hostages over that of the Palestinians caught in the middle of Israel’s war against Hamas in Gaza.’

Fox News Digital has independently confirmed the Times of Israel account. Hamas murdered nearly 1,200 people during its invasion of Israel on Oct. 7 and abducted over 250 people. [Hamas committed sustained sexual violence](https://www.foxnews.com/world/idf-claims-photos-show-hamas-combatants-un-compound-rafah) on many people during the massacre.

The meeting organized by [the U.S. mission to the U.N.](https://usun.usmission.gov/united-states-to-convene-arria-formula-meeting-on-condemning-hostage-taking-in-israel-on-october-7-as-a-psychological-tool-of-terrorism/) is the first to be held on the topic. A statement from the Israeli mission to the U.N. said the ‘meeting will focus on, among other things, the actions that the U.N. agencies and the Security Council can take to speed up the release of the hostages and how pressure can be put on Hamas for this purpose.’

Israel's Ambassador Gilad Erdan stated that ‘Following an unceasing diplomatic effort, we brought about the Security Council meeting for the first time to focus exclusively on the situation of our hostages and to discuss ways of exerting pressure to release them.’

Geraldine Boezio, a spokeswoman for Patten, told Fox News Digital, ‘Although regretfully she cannot participate in the Arria formula meeting [informal meeting of members of UNSC], the Special Representative supports any process that leads towards the release of the hostages.Crucially, the public should be aware that the Office of the UN Special Representative and the Government of Israel are continuing to have productive bilateral discussions on how to address sexual violence in conflict given the importance of this issue. These discussions are presently ongoing.’

The spokeswoman added ‘Special Representative Patten has repeatedly called for the release of all hostages in captivity in Gaza in multiple public statements since December 2023. Her Office’s report on its mission to Israel and the occupied West Bank released in March 2024 had clear and unequivocal findings and recommendations with respect to the hostages, and these were a key aspect of her statement to the U.N. Security Council’s special session on the report held on 11 Mach 2024. Once again, Special Representative Patten reiterated these findings and recommendations in her public remarks to the U.N. Security Council at its Open Debate on the Annual Report of the UN Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence as recently as 23 April 2024.’

Bayefsky said ‘Starting with the U.N. Secretary-General himself, who in April refused to put Hamas, or any other Palestinian rapist or violent sexual degenerate, on his annual ‘list of parties credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict on the agenda of the Security Council.’

‘Other U.N. officials, such as U.N. Special Rapporteurs Francesca Albanese and Reem Alsalem, have been actively pushing the obscene lie that Israelis did the same thing to Palestinians that Palestinians were ‘alleged’ or ‘reported’ to have done to Israelis. Evidently the truth in U.N. circles is unfashionable and not on message.’

Fox News Digital [reported in December](https://www.foxnews.com/world/fury-un-antisemitic-committee-probing-hamas-sexual-atrocities-against-israeli-women) that the Jordanian Alsalem issued a [statement Nov. 20](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/women-bearing-brunt-israel-gaza-conflict-un-expert) on the U.N. website but did not explicitly condemn Hamas for carrying out rapes and sexual assaults against Israeli women and girls. The bulk of Alsalem’s press release was devoted to blaming Israel for alleged violence against Palestinian women. Alsalem declined to comment at the time.

Israel’s government has repeatedly called for United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to resign for his alleged failures to confront Hamas terrorism and the organization’s sexual crimes. Last month, Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz accused Guterres of standing ‘shoulder to shoulder with the rapists and murderers of Hamas’ for omitting mention of Hamas’ sexual violence crimes in in a report ‘Conflict-related sexual violence.’

Farhan Aziz Haq, a spokesman for Guterres, flatly rejected the criticism leveled against Guterres. He told Fox News Digital about the allegations, stating, ‘That’s completely false. The Secretary-General made clear his horror at all the killings, rapes and abductions that took place on October 7 from the first hours of the attack, and he has repeatedly called for all reports of sexual violence to be investigated.’

Aziz Haq added ‘Pramila Patten, as you know, has visited Israel and has briefed the Security Council and the media on her findings. We continue to place a high priority in making sure that rape victims are heard and that they receive support.’

When approached by Fox News Digital, a spokesman for [Linda Thomas-Greenfield](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/who-is-linda-thomas-greenfield), the United States ambassador to the United Nations, declined to comment on Patten's attendance.