Albanese claims Hamas should be understood as a 'political force,' not 'fighters'

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<https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-864372>

United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories Francesca Albanese defended Hamas’s rule over the Gaza Strip in an address earlier this week, shared on social media by UN Watch on Friday.

The controversial UN figure, who has frequently been accused of antisemitism and anti-Israel bias, claimed in Italian that she didn’t think people understood what Hamas really is: ‘a political force.’

‘Hamas is a political force that won the elections in 2005, whether we like it or not,’ she claimed. ‘Those were called the most democratic elections.’

Albanese also stressed that Hamas had organized and constructed much of Gaza’s public services, including schools and hospitals. She did not comment on the repeated evidence that Hamas had operated much of its terror operations from within or underneath these civilian structures, as evidenced throughout the Israel-Hamas war by the IDF on numerous occasions.

‘It is critical that you understand that when you think of Hamas, you should not necessarily think of cut-throats, people armed to the teeth or fighters,’ she told the crowd. ‘It’s not like that.’

Throughout the war, Albanese has levied accusations of genocide, war crimes and apartheid against Israel. Earlier this week, she told the Guardian that she believed countries should end trade with Israel and embargo all weapons sales.

‘The occupation is profitable, and so is the genocide, and this is shocking, but it is to be known in order to be seen and to be stopped,’ she claimed. ‘The power is not just with the prime ministers or with the governments. The power is with us, and we can start choosing through our wallet.’

‘Antisemitism and discrimination against Jews as Jews is gross,’ Albanese claimed in an interview with The Guardian in December. ‘But frankly I couldn’t care less if Israel were run by Jews, Muslims, Christians or atheists… All I want is for Israel to conduct itself in line with international law.’

While Hamas began the current war with its October 7, 2023, massacre, breaching an existing ceasefire with its invasion into southern Israel, Albanese told the Guardian that the Palestinian side of the struggle had ‘ already won the legitimacy battle.’

‘Everyone knows what Israel has done to them for the past 77 years,’ she said. ‘They’ve already made history – and not through violence as some try to portray them – but with their perseverance and principles and trust in the justice system, which has not been their ally.’

**Francesca Albanese’s history of controversy**

Following the October 7 massacre, Albanese wrote that ‘violence must be put in context’ and that the attack occurred in response to Israeli ‘aggression.’

Hamas murdered over 1,200 people during the attack, including children and foreign nationals. During their rampage through southern Israel, the terror group abducted over 250 people, including civilian women and children and foreign nationals.

The terror group used acts of sexual violence and torture both on the day of the massacre and as they continue to hold Israeli nationals captive, according to testimonies from released hostages and the autopsy results of hostages returned to Israel.

**US pushes back against Albanese**

 In a 2014 Facebook post, she claimed, ‘America is subjugated by the Jewish Lobby,’ according to a [UN Watch report](https://www.jpost.com/international/article-848967) titled ‘Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing: Why Democracies Should Sanction UN Rapporteur Francesca Albanese.’

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio[imposed sanctions on Albanese](https://www.jpost.com/international/article-860524) last month over her efforts to have the International Criminal Court take action against US and Israeli officials, companies, and executives.

‘Albanese’s campaign of political and economic warfare against the United States and Israel will no longer be tolerated,’ Rubio said.

[The Trump administration](https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-859686) has also called on the UN to remove Albanese from her position, alleging ‘virulent antisemitism and support for terrorism,’ according to a letter obtained by The Washington Free Beacon.