Christian groups file defamation lawsuit against Francesca Albanese

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On behalf of Christian Friends of Israeli Communities and Christians for Israel USA, the National Jewish Advocacy Center (NJAC) has filed a federal lawsuit against Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian territories, for defamation, trade libel, and tortious interference.

The lawsuit filed today in the U.S. Federal District Court in Colorado contends that Albanese launched a malicious and false campaign accusing the charities of war crimes and other heinous acts—claims that the plaintiffs call ‘wholly baseless.’ The plaintiffs also state that Albanese ‘knowingly published these falsehoods’ despite explicit warnings from one of the charities and the U.S. Department of Justice that her accusations were defamatory and dangerous.

‘If a racist antisemite gains a position of power and proceeds to abuse the public platform she enjoys in order to perpetuate lies about American religious organizations for their compassion toward and allyship with the Jewish people and the Jewish State of Israel by smearing them and calling for them to be blacklisted and sanctioned, she can and should be held liable for defamation,’ said Rachel Sebbag, NJAC litigation counsel, who is representing the plaintiffs.

The plaintiffs further stated: ‘This past June, Albanese took her long history of blatant antisemitism to the next level by issuing a false report claiming U.S. companies and their executives who work with Israel are enabling genocide. The former UN Special Rapporteur on the Palestinian territories went on the offensive against Christians doing charitable works in Israel. She launched a smear campaign against the complainants, telling both plaintiffs in an April 24, 205 letter, they’ve engaged in 'gross human rights violations,' war crimes, crimes against humanity, apartheid, crimes of aggression, willful killing, and willfully causing great suffering.’

‘Persecution of Israel, the Jewish people, and their supporters is not new. Albanese’s goal is to cut off our love and support for Israel, and she tramples our freedoms in the process,’ explained Willem Griffioen, Chairman of Christians for Israel International and Christians for Israel USA. ‘We share a faith in the G-d of Israel, and we will be that voice standing for the truth even if we ourselves are being attacked. We will not be silent.’

The complaint file claims, among numerous allegations, that Albanese sought ‘to Destroy Plaintiffs’ Reputations and Economic Wellbeing, Defendant Maliciously and With Cavalier Disregard for Truth, Launched a Smear Campaign Against Them Due to their Support for Jews and Israel.’

‘Some of the vilest antisemites and terror supporters have sought to shield themselves from accountability for their actions by hiding behind the UN flag. But as UNRWA recently discovered, automatic immunity for anyone claiming a UN affiliation is over. The Trump Administration has commendably sanctioned Albanese, but the American citizens she has harmed deserve direct justice,’ said Eugene Kontorovich, a professor at George Mason University’s Scalia Law School and a senior research fellow at Heritage Foundation, who advised the legal team on the suit.

The plaintiffs added: ‘Albanese led a slanderous campaign against Christian organizations and promoted blatant falsehoods pertaining to Israel, leading to heads of the Christian groups receiving death threats. Her efforts have inspired angry mobs in Europe to attack and vandalize the plaintiffs’ offices as well as some governments considering revoking the groups’ charitable status.’

‘Our mission is simple: to connect Christians with Jewish communities in Israel and foster relationships,’ said Kimberly Troup, Director, US Office, Christian Friends of Israeli Communities. ‘Francesca Albanese’s defamatory campaign has placed our work, our staff, and our donors at great risk. We will not allow lies and antisemitism to silence us.’