Francesca Albanese: A Comprehensive Review of Misconduct as a UN Special Rapporteur

Israel National Digital Agency

<https://govextra.gov.il/mda/francescaalbanese/un-misconduct-review/>

This brief — based on a review of public sources, official reports, and documented statements — examines the extent to which Francesca Albanese’s conduct as UN Special Rapporteur is fundamentally incompatible with the responsibilities and ethical standards of her mandate.

Appointed in 2022 under the UN Human Rights Council’s “Special Procedures,” Albanese holds a position that grants her institutional visibility and access to international platforms. While she does not formally represent the UN, mandate holders are widely perceived as authoritative voices legitimized by the United Nations system and are expected to uphold its core values without prejudice.

Throughout her tenure, Albanese has repeatedly violated the norms of impartiality, universality, and professional integrity that are foundational to her UN mandate. Her public statements have featured Holocaust distortion, denial of Israel’s right to exist, and rhetoric that minimizes or justifies terrorist violence — language fundamentally at odds with the principles of international human rights law. These actions have drawn sustained condemnation from democratic governments, civil society organizations, and academic institutions, many of which have denounced her conduct as antisemitic and morally indefensible. The widespread backlash reflects not only the gravity of her transgressions but also the significant reputational damage her continued role has inflicted on the legitimacy and credibility of the UN human rights system.

Violating UN Ethical Standards:

As a UN-appointed expert, Albanese is bound by the OHCHR Code of Conduct ([Human Rights Council resolution 5/2, Articles 3–6](https://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=a/hrc/res/5/2)), which mandates:

* Objectivity, independence, integrity, and fairness
* Avoidance of hate speech or incitement to violence
* Abstention from actions that compromise neutrality
* Full disclosure of external funding

Albanese has repeatedly violated these obligations through her public statements, affiliations, and conduct — each detailed in the sections that follow.

Normalizing Political Violence

In December 2022, Francesca Albanese delivered a video address to a Gaza conference organized by the Council on International Relations–Palestine (CIR Palestine) —a Hamas-affiliated think tank that openly advocates the “full liberation of Palestine,” a phrase widely understood to denote the elimination of the State of Israel. CIR Palestine has explicitly declared that “the Palestinian people will continue their struggle and resistance to the occupation until liberating the entire Palestinian land... using all means available and legitimate”, language echoing the Hamas Covenant’s call for Israel’s destruction.

The conference featured senior officials from Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, both designated as terrorist organizations by the U.S. and EU. Albanese’s remarks—[*“Israel says ‘resistance equals terrorism,’ but an occupation requires violence and generates violence”*](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-724023)—were broadcast on Hamas-affiliated media and closely aligned with the event’s ideological framing. Her participation lent legitimacy to a platform glorifying armed violence and advancing maximalist, anti-Israel narratives.

By appearing alongside representatives of terror-designated entities and endorsing rhetoric that blurs the line between lawful resistance and the targeting of civilians — explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law — Albanese violated the UN ethical obligations of impartiality, integrity, and universality required of UN mandate holders.

Moreover, Albanese has refused to unequivocally condemn the October 7 massacre by Hamas. Rather than denounce it as a terrorist atrocity, she publicly framed the attack as a [“response to oppression”](https://x.com/francescalbanes/status/1711448675070837119), a framing that was widely condemned by democratic governments as morally indefensible and implicitly justificatory.

Maintaining Ties with Terror-Linked Entities

Albanese has participated in events hosted by [Al-Haq](https://www.alhaq.org/) and the [Palestinian Return Centre (PRC)](https://prc.org.uk/)— organizations officially designated by Israel as affiliated with terrorist groups. Al-Haq is linked to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a group responsible for the murder of civilians in numerous attacks, including airport massacres, synagogue killings, and suicide bombings. The PRC is identified as part of Hamas’s global organizational network. These affiliations constitute a serious breach of the neutrality required of UN mandate holders and reflect a broader pattern of alignment with organizations associated with violent extremism.

Misrepresenting International Law and Denying Israel’s Right to Self-Defense

Albanese has repeatedly misrepresented international humanitarian law, claiming that Israel has no right to self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter when operating in occupied territories. This interpretation ignores decades of evolving legal practice and selectively cites the 2004 ICJ Advisory Opinion on Israel’s security barrier.

While the ICJ did question the applicability of Article 51 in the occupied territories context, it also explicitly acknowledged Israel’s right and duty to defend its civilians. As the Court [stated](https://www.vox.com/2014/8/7/5975255/9-questions-you-were-embarrassed-to-ask-about-whether-the-war-in-gaza):

*“The Court is aware that Israel has to face numerous indiscriminate and deadly acts of violence against its civilian population. It has the right, and indeed the duty, to respond in order to protect the life of its citizens.”*

By omitting this key passage and disregarding the broader context of self-defense against non-state actors, Albanese advances a politicized and legally inconsistent position that undermines Israel’s legitimacy and violates the impartiality expected of a UN mandate holder.

Undeclared Financial Support

A May 2025 [UN Watch report](https://unwatch.org/un-watch-report-francesca-albanese-violations) revealed that Francesca Albanese failed to disclose external funding received in connection with her official UN visit to Australia and New Zealand in November 2023, in violation of Article 6 of the UN Code of Conduct. The trip included public appearances hosted by Georgetown University’s Middle East Policy Forum. The opaque funding sources raise serious concerns about transparency and adherence to the UN’s Code of Conduct.

Using and Spreading Antisemitic Rhetoric

While legitimate criticism of government policies is essential in democratic discourse, Albanese’s rhetoric meets several criteria under the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism), adopted by dozens of countries and international bodies.

In a review of 586 of her posts and publications, 146 (25%) exhibited antisemitic themes, including:

* **Promoting conspiratorial tropes**
In a 2014 tweet, Albanese wrote that “America is enslaved by the Jewish lobby”, echoing antisemitic tropes of Jewish control over Western governments.
* **Distorting the Holocaust**
Albanese has equated the Holocaust with the Nakba, portraying both as comparable national tragedies. This form of equivalence is widely recognized as Holocaust distortion under the [IHRA definition](https://www.holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definitions-charters/working-definition-antisemitism), which warns against relativizing the Holocaust to serve political narratives.
* **Denying Israel’s right to exist**
Albanese has repeatedly described Israel as a "colonial entity" or “colonial project”, from its inception, and questioned its right to exist as a Jewish state.
* **Ignoring the issue of antisemitism**
Despite the post-October 7, 2023 spike in antisemitic violence, Albanese has not condemned a single attack against Jews in Europe or the U.S. Her silence on these attacks, despite rising antisemitic violence, reflects a concerning indifference. Moreover, in a televised interview, when asked point-blank whether she is an antisemite, she failed to give a direct answer.

Legitimizing violence and terrorism under UN mandate

Albanese’s record shows repeated engagement with entities tied to terror, statements implying justification of violence, and failure to address human rights violations by Hamas. Up to 2025, she has:

* Participated in a 2022 Gaza conference organized by a group promoting the elimination of Israel and funded by Hamas, as recalled above.
* Collaborated with Hamas- and PFLP-linked NGOs, including [Al-Haq](https://www.alhaq.org/), Addameer, and the [Palestinian Return Centre](https://prc.org.uk/).
* Received external funding through an affiliated organization without proper disclosure, in violation of UN transparency standards.
* Tweeted support for a [European court’s temporary removal of Hamas from the terror list](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-court-hamas-idUSKBN0JW1PS20141217).
* Described the October 7 attacks as stemming from "occupation and despair."
* Employed the term "resistance" without distinguishing between combatants and civilians victimized by these so-called “acts of resistance”.
* Promoted a binary narrative of oppressor vs. oppressed, erasing the conflict’s complexity and accusing EU leaders of war crimes.

Albanese’s Conduct Has Prompted Global Condemnation

Albanese’s statements sparked unprecedented backlash from government officials and academic institutions alike

State responses:

* **USA (April 3, 2025):** [Condemned her for antisemitism and Hamas support](https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/).
* **Germany:** [Denounced her comparison of Netanyahu to Hitler.](https://x.com/GerAmbTLV/status/1816868708167614793)
* **The Netherlands (March 26, 2025):** [Its government officially disapproved](https://www.government.nl/latest/news) of several of her social media statements, stating they were “at odds with the Code of Conduct”.
* **France:** Called her comments on October 7 a “disgrace,” accusing her of justifying the largest antisemitic massacre of the 21st century.
* **EU Lawmakers:** [Declared her mandate renewal a "grave mistake”](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en).

Academic responses:

* [Universities in Berlin and Munich](https://www.tagesspiegel.de/gesellschaft/medien/auftritt-von-un-sonderberichterstatterin-francesca-albanese-in-berlin-abgesagt-11174834.html) canceled her appearances over concerns of hate speech.
* [University of Bern](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/un-special-rapporteur-scratched-from-university-of-bern-panel/49461264) canceled an Amnesty International panel featuring Albanese, citing concerns about a “lack of balance.”

Calls for dismissal:

* **US House Foreign Affairs Committee (March 31, 2025):** [Called for her removal](https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/).
* **US Mission to the United Nations:** Issued [formal protest.](https://usun.usmission.gov/u-s-mission-to-the-united-nations-statement-opposing-francesca-albaneses-mandate-as-un-special-rapporteur/)
* **Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** [Announced it would not support her reappointment](https://www.government.nl/ministries/ministry-of-foreign-affairs).
* **UN Watch:** [Submitted 100,000-signature petition](https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/fire-un-special-rapporteur-francesca-albanese/) to the Human Rights Council.

Escalation: U.S. Government Formally Demands Albanese’s Removal

In July 2025, the United States formally demanded that the United Nations remove Francesca Albanese from her role as Special Rapporteur, citing “virulent antisemitism, support for terrorism, and misrepresentation of legal credentials.” The request, conveyed in diplomatic correspondence obtained by the *Washington Free Beacon*, represents an escalation in international concern over Albanese’s conduct.

According to Acting U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Dorothy Shea, Albanese sent threatening letters to leading global corporations—primarily American—urging them to cut ties with Israel or face “potential criminal liability.” The letters, described as “riddled with inflammatory rhetoric and false legal claims,” accused these entities of contributing to “gross human rights violations, apartheid, and genocide.”

The United States further asserted that Albanese falsely presented herself as an “international lawyer,” despite not having passed a legal bar examination or holding a license to practice law. In the view of the U.S. delegation, this misrepresentation undermines her credibility, disqualifies her from diplomatic immunity, and violates the UN Code of Conduct.

The letter also raised concerns about a draft report released by Albanese, which accuses Israel of fostering an “economy of genocide.” U.S. officials deemed the report to contain “fundamental legal errors” and declared that her work is “baseless under established international law.”

Ambassador Shea warned that continued UN inaction would not only discredit the organization but would also compel a response to address “her campaign of political and economic warfare targeting major corporations worldwide.”

While the UN Secretariat stated that it has no authority over Special Rapporteurs—who operate under the Human Rights Council—Shea reiterated the United States’ longstanding objection to Albanese’s mandate and called for her immediate dismissal.

**Read the full U.S. letter (PDF):** [Download here](https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/June-letter-Full-PDF.pdf).

Conclusion: An Erosion of UN Credibility

Albanese’s conduct exemplifies the dangers of ideological partisanship within UN roles. Her rhetoric and affiliations have eroded the credibility of her mandate and the broader UN human rights system. Her deviation from the professional, ethical, and legal standards expected of UN experts has not only degraded her position but has also compromised the institutional integrity of the system she represents. All democratic nations who support human rights monitoring in an impartial and objective manner should consider procedural actions against her conduct, in order to mitigate the serious damage her continued role has inflicted to the UN’s mission and credibility.