

UN human rights expert calls for prosecution of EU Officials over complicity in Israeli war crimes

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On May 3, the United Nations Special Rapporteur for human rights in Palestinian territories, Francesca Albanese, called for the prosecution of leading European Union officials for complicity in the war crimes committed by Israel.

In a series of interviews and reports, Albanese accused in particular the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Kaja Kalla. Albanese condemned the EU leaders for aiding and abetting gross violations of international law through their unconditional support for Israel. “The fact that the two highest figures of the EU continue business-as-usual engagements with Israel is beyond deplorable,” Albanese stated. “Immunity cannot equate with impunity. They will have to be judged before history does.”

In an interview with *The Intercept* Albanese reiterated: “I’m not someone who says, ‘History will judge them’—they will have to be judged before then.”

A formal complaint has already been filed with the International Criminal Court (ICC) accusing von der Leyen of complicity in war crimes. Albanese also specifically criticised Kallas for comments the latter made during a visit to Tel Aviv in March. Kallas downplayed the suffering of Palestinians and white-washed the murderous campaign of the fascistic regime in Tel Aviv, describing the situation in Gaza as “a loss for both sides.”

In March, this year the aid agency Amnesty International also condemned the EU for refusing to criticise Israel’s breaking of a ceasefire agreement by undertaking renewed airstrikes in Gaza. In response to a statement from the European Council, the director of Amnesty International’s European Institutions Office, Eve Geddie, noted that the EU had failed to mention Israel in its statement on the airstrikes and the blockade of all humanitarian aid. The EU statement merely urged Hamas to release all hostages while making no mention of the more than 4,000 Palestinians detained in Israel without charges or trial. Amnesty International

summed up the response of the EU as “another shameful attempt to justify Israel’s genocide and war crimes against Palestinians.”

As the WSWS has reported the Israeli government has now commenced the final stage of its plan for the ethnic cleansing of Gaza. Following the imposition on March 2 of a total blockade on all food, water and electricity entering the Gaza Strip, mass hunger is ravaging the population with cases of acute malnutrition surging by more than 80 percent. At the same time Israel has continued its military operations on a daily basis with the targeted bombings of UN shelters, food distribution centres and hospitals. The last resort for the desperate and defenceless men, women and children in Gaza has become the front line in Israel’s ruthless war.

International officials who speak out against the genocide have been subjected to an unrelenting campaign of harassment. Since issuing an initial report in March 2024 that identified Israeli actions as genocide, Albanese, who is working on a report to expose the role of financial entities, tech companies, and universities in the genocide, has received a series of death threats and intense pressure from the US, Israel and Europe to prevent the renewal of her appointment at the UN. In the course of her visit to Germany she was confronted with abruptly cancelled lectures, police harassment and threats of arrest. During her time in Germany in February Albanese stated, “I have never felt this sense of lacking oxygen that I feel here.”

Ursula von der Leyen is a member of the Christian Democrat Union, the party led by Germany’s recently elected new chancellor Friedrich Merz who has also played a major role in enabling Israel’s war crimes. As leader of the CDU in October 2024, it was Merz who argued that the German government resume weapons deliveries to Israel. Merz is also on record for proposing to strip people with dual citizenship of their German citizenship should they participate in protests against Israel.

In February 2025, one day after the German federal

election, the CDU's chancellor candidate Merz announced his intention to invite to Germany the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a war criminal who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on the charge of carrying out a genocide.

Following his assumption of office on May 6, Germany's new Chancellor Friedrich Merz (Christian Democratic Union) held his first phone conversation with a foreign leader with Netanyahu. In the call on Thursday Merz repeated the mantra of the German state, stressing his commitment to the existence and security of Israel as a core principle of the German state 80 years after World War II.

Merz authorised the German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul to visit Israel on Sunday and the Israeli President Isaac Herzog is scheduled to travel to Berlin on Monday at the invitation of the German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Steinmeier is expected to make a reciprocal visit to Jerusalem shortly afterward.

It should be noted that the support afforded to the Israeli state is not restricted to the CDU. Merz governs in a coalition with the Social Democratic Party which, under its former Chancellor Olaf Scholz, also extended unconditional support and arms supplies to the regime in Tel Aviv together with its coalition partners, the Greens and the Free Democratic Party.

Not to be left out, the German opposition party in the Bundestag, the Left Party, is an integral member of the alliance supporting Israel. On the same day Merz made his fawning call to Netanyahu, the Left Party issued a statement of the party's executive committee resolution titled "The right of the State of Israel to exist is non-negotiable for us." It was only through the support of the Left Party that Merz was able to enforce a second vote in the Bundestag at the start of last week to ensure his election as chancellor.

The hypocrisy of the German and Israeli elites is breathtaking. When Herzog visits Berlin Steinmeier is expected to accompany him to the Treptow 17 Memorial at the Grunewald train station in Berlin—one of the sites from which thousands of Jews were deported to concentration camps during the Holocaust. This past week has seen a series of ceremonies in Germany hailing the end of WWII and the liberation of the camps where the National Socialists undertook their genocide of European Jewry. In the course of these events there has been a deafening silence about the current genocide and final solution being carried out by the Israeli government.

It should be noted that at the Wannsee Conference held on January 20, 1942, the Nazi elite participating agreed that the precise nature of their plans for the liquidation of Jews in Europe should not be made public. The official minutes of the meeting, the Wannsee Protocol, were written by Adolf

Eichmann in consultation with SS-Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich, who called and chaired the conference. At the end of the conference Heydrich stressed that the minutes should not be verbatim. The elimination of Jewry in Europe was euphemistically referred to in the minutes as the "evacuation" of the Jews. At his trial in Jerusalem in 1961 Eichmann related: "How shall I put it – certain over-plain talk and jargon expressions had to be rendered into office language by me."

Over one and a half years later, in October 4, 1943, Heinrich Himmler addressed senior SS Officers in Poznan and declared: "I also want to speak to you here, in complete frankness, of a really grave chapter. Amongst ourselves, for once, it shall be said quite openly, but all the same we will never speak about it in public. I am referring here to the evacuation of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish people. This is an unwritten and never-to-be-written page of glory in our history."

While the Nazis sought to disguise their crimes, the genocide being carried out by the Israeli government is plain to see. Despite the systematic targeting and elimination of hundreds of journalists, details of the appalling plight of those trapped in Gaza, who are being rounded up and forced into concentration camps are freely available on social media.

In fact, alongside von der Leyen and Kaja Kalla, the leaders of the EU's most prominent member countries, such as the UK's Keir Starmer, the French President Emmanuel Macron, and Germany's new head of government Friedrich Merz, also belong in the dock and tried for complicity in war crimes.



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