

# Due to speak on the genocide in Gaza, UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese is censored in Switzerland

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Following the publication of a devastating report detailing the involvement of major international concerns in the genocide in Gaza, a meeting to be addressed by the UN official Francesca Albanese in Bern, Switzerland was cancelled at the last moment.

The UN Special Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Albanese was scheduled to appear at a series of three meetings in Switzerland starting with an event at the University of Bern on Monday. At the last moment, and clearly under pressure from Zionist and Swiss officials, permission for the meeting was withdrawn. The university argued that the permit for the event had been withdrawn “due to a lack of balance” on the part of the speaker.

Albanese was invited to Switzerland by the human rights organisation Amnesty International, which maintains that the Israeli actions in Gaza amount to genocide. In response to the university’s stance, Amnesty International spokesperson Beat Gerber declared: “It appears that the University of Bern has backed down under external pressure and is putting aside freedom of expression.”

As was the case some months ago in Germany following the cancellation of a planned meeting at a university, an alternative venue was found in Bern on short notice and Albanese was able to address around 400 people on Monday evening.

Francesca Albanese is a widely respected expert on international law, who, in her official function for the UN, declared in March 2024 that she saw “reasonable grounds” for assuming genocide in Israel’s military action in Gaza. Albanese expanded and concretised this claim with her report for the UN last October, which stated that the actions of the Israeli government following its invasion of Gaza fulfilled all the criteria, according to international law, for the crime of genocide.

At the beginning of May this year, Albanese called for the prosecution of leading European Union officials, in particular, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Kaja Kallas, for complicity in the war crimes committed by Israel.

As was the case in Germany, prior to her visit to Switzerland,

Albanese, who has received multiple death threats, was subjected to a torrent of violent abuse from Zionist media outlets and the country’s leading right-wing daily, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, claiming she was a supporter of terrorism and antisemitism. Predictably, the *Jüdische Allgemeine* ran with the headline “Francesca Albanese’s Horror Show.”

Despite its reputation as a politically neutral country, Switzerland has long-standing relations with the state of Israel and has followed the lead from Tel Aviv and Washington in backing Israel’s war against the Palestinians in Gaza.

Deploping the country’s role in enabling the genocide in Gaza, 55 former Swiss diplomats put their signatures to a letter addressed to Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis on Sunday. In the letter, the diplomats denounce Switzerland’s “silence and passivity” regarding Israel’s “war crimes” in Gaza and call upon the government to immediately reject Israel’s plan “to expel the civilian population from Gaza and for Israel to reoccupy the territory militarily.” Such actions on the part of the Israeli government and military are nothing less than “forms of ethnic cleansing and genocidal processes,” the ambassadors write.

The letter also calls for the suspension of all scientific and academic cooperation with Israel that violates international law, along with all cooperation, funding and investment in the two countries’ military and intelligence sectors.

The latest attempts to silence Albanese come in the wake of the damning report she has drawn up revealing the extent of the involvement of major companies in the US and other countries in providing the weaponry for the Israeli war machine.

Titled “From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide,” the report declares that the subject of its investigation is “The role of corporate entities in sustaining Israel’s illegal occupation and ongoing genocidal campaign in Gaza ... aimed at dispossessing and erasing Palestinians from their lands.”

The report lists a multitude of international companies and businesses from the following sectors: “arms manufacturers, tech firms, building and construction companies, extractive and service industries, banks, pension funds, insurers, universities

and charities.” The firms active in these sectors, according to the report, “enable the denial of self-determination and other structural violations in the occupied Palestinian territory, including occupation, annexation and crimes of apartheid and genocide, as well as a long list of ancillary crimes and human rights violations, from discrimination, wanton destruction, forced displacement and pillage, to extrajudicial killing and starvation.”

The report states that “the military-industrial complex” is the economic backbone of the Israeli state, with two companies in particular, Elbit Systems and the state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), providing most of the weaponry for the Israeli onslaught against Gaza, while at the same time raking in massive profits through the export of its armaments.

The most important collaborator for the Israeli war machine is the United States. The report notes that “Israel benefits from the largest-ever defence procurement programme—for the F-35 fighter jet led by US-based Lockheed Martin, alongside at least 1,600 other companies, including Italian manufacturer Leonardo S.p.A, and eight states.” Deploying the F-35 and F-16 fighter jets provided by Lockheed Martin, the Israeli air force has been equipped with “the unprecedented aerial power to drop an estimated 85,000 tons of bombs, kill and injure more than 179,411 Palestinians and obliterate Gaza.”

As is always the case with capitalist wars, big fortunes are to be made. The report notes that “For Israeli companies like Elbit and IAI, the ongoing genocide has been a profitable venture. The 65 percent surge in Israel’s military spending from 2023 to 2024—amounting to \$46.5 billion, one of the highest per capita worldwide—generated a sharp surge in their annual profits. Foreign arms companies, especially the producers of munitions and ordnance, also profit.”

The lengthy report, which should be studied closely, also includes a section entitled: “Surveillance and carcerality: The dark side of the ‘Start-up Nation.’”

This section describes the massive boom in start-ups in Israel following 9/11. US tech giants such as Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon and Palantir are heavily involved in such start-ups, aimed at developing the surveillance services used by Israel’s military, security and intelligence agencies to conduct its genocidal war in Gaza.

The report published by Albanese presents a detailed and damning indictment of the role played by major capitalist companies in the “final solution” being carried out by Israel. It is due to be presented to the 47-member UN Human Rights Council on Thursday.

The report ends lamely by calling for international legal action against the companies named, but such appeals fall upon deaf ears in countries which are increasingly ignoring and defying institutions such as the International Criminal Court, set up ostensibly to prevent genocide and war crimes. Both Israel and the United States withdrew from the UN Human Rights Council earlier this year, citing bias against Israel.

The most famous figure associated with Bern is the brilliant physicist Albert Einstein, who worked for a number of years at the patent office in the city, just a few kilometers from the university that banned Albanese on Monday. There is little doubt that were he alive today, Einstein would rise to the defence of Albanese and condemn the fascists dictating government policy in Washington and Tel Aviv.

Einstein, who came to recognise his own Jewishness only when he arrived in Germany in 1914, supported a homeland for Jews after the murder of 6 million in Nazi concentration camps. At the same time he was virulently opposed to a Jewish nation-state that oppressed Arabs.

Just weeks before the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948, Einstein wrote:

When a real and final catastrophe should befall us in Palestine, the first responsible for it would be the British and the second responsible for it the terrorist organizations built up from our own ranks. I am not willing to see anybody associated with those misled and criminal people.

First and foremost amongst the criminal people referred to by Einstein was Menachem Begin, leader of the Irgun terrorist group, later prime minister of Israel and co-chairman of the Likud party, headed today by the war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu.

With a great deal of foresight, also in 1948, Einstein wrote that Begin headed “a political party very close in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and fascist parties.”



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