UN report finds “reasonable grounds” for war crimes charges in US missile strike on girls’ school in Iran

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A United Nations (UN) fact-finding mission has concluded that there are “reasonable grounds to believe” that the United States committed war crimes in air strikes on two civilian sites in Iran at the opening of the US-Israeli war.

The findings are a devastating exposure of the criminal character of the unprovoked imperialist war launched on February 28, 2026, by the Trump administration with the assistance of the Israeli government.

The report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Iran identifies the February 28 strike on the Shajareh Tayyebeh Primary School in Minab, Hormozgan Province, as an indiscriminate attack on an unmistakably civilian target. Iranian local authorities put the death toll at between 156 and 157 people, including 120 to 123 children.

The lesser-known second airstrike analyzed in the report was on the same date and hit a sports center and residential area in Lamerd, Fars Province. The death toll from this attack was 22 people, including two schoolgirls and two schoolboys, and a two-year-old girl who was playing in front of her home.

The girls’ school in Minab was struck as the US and Israel began a massive air assault against Iran. The school stood beside an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) naval complex, itself reportedly attacked that day. UN investigators found that proximity to a military installation does not turn a functioning primary school into a lawful target.

The school was “clearly identifiable,” and the mission found “no evidence that it was being used for military purposes.” The UN report’s conclusion is unambiguous: “The Mission finds reasonable grounds to believe that the US committed the war crime of launching an indiscriminate attack resulting in loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects.”

The mission rejected the central implication of the US government’s early efforts to depict the school’s destruction as an accident arising from an attack on the nearby IRGC facility. It concluded that “the building of the school was the intended point of impact and that the damage did not result from an errant strike or collateral damage” from the strike on the naval complex.

This conclusion rested in part on survivor accounts that the school was struck twice. It also rested on the physical character of the target, its visibility as a school and the lack of any information showing military use.

The death of more than 120 children in one attack demonstrates the methods employed by US imperialism: overwhelming military violence, combined with contempt for the lives of civilians in the targeted country and an official apparatus dedicated to concealment and impunity.

Volker Türk, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, earlier described the destruction in Minab as evoking “a visceral horror.” The images of “bombed-out classrooms and grieving parents,” he said, showed “who pays the highest price for war: civilians with no power in the decisions that led to conflict.”

The fact-finding mission did not accept any allegations by the Iranian government. It used a methodology based on the available physical, witness and open-source evidence, coupled with an assessment of the weapons known to be held by the parties to the conflict.

The investigators cited reports that a preliminary US military inquiry had found US forces responsible for the Minab strike. They further noted that the United States was the only party in the conflict possessing Tomahawk missiles, the weapon linked to the strike. The cumulative evidence led the investigators to find reasonable grounds to attribute the attack to the United States.

The mission did not claim to be a criminal court rendering a final verdict after access to every US military record, pilot log, targeting file and weapons assessment. Its finding is that the evidence available establishes reasonable grounds for believing that a war crime was committed. That report’s conclusion is damning because Washington has withheld the very material that could either substantiate or disprove the allegations.

The circumstances surrounding the UN investigation underline the bullying imperialist character of Washington’s response. The US military has not publicly released the results of its own investigation into the Minab school bombing, despite earlier acknowledgment that an inquiry was underway.

The refusal to disclose its targeting intelligence, weapons

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data, operational orders and internal findings sharply limits independent verification. This response also permits the US government to alternate between evasion, partial admission and categorical denial without being subjected to scrutiny.

The UN investigation proceeded amid a wider humanitarian catastrophe. Its report stressed that Iranian civilians were being caught between deadly US-Israeli airstrikes and the Iranian state's repression of protests that began in late 2025. The mission found that the Iranian government had committed crimes against humanity during the crackdown, including murder, imprisonment and torture.

That finding regarding the Iranian state does not diminish in any way the responsibility of US imperialism for its own crimes. On the contrary, as US imperialism has done repeatedly for more than a century, the invocation by the Trump administration of the democratic rights for the Iranian people is a familiar pretext for military aggression.

The fact-finding mission reached a parallel conclusion on the February 28 strike on the sports center and residential area in Lamerd, Fars Province. That attack killed 22 civilians and injured more than 100, according to local officials. Other reporting cited at least 21 deaths, including seven children.

The weapon reportedly used was a Precision Strike Missile, or PrSM, which dispersed clouds of tungsten pellets over the sports complex and nearby residential areas. The mission found that the site was clearly identifiable as civilian infrastructure and that there was no evidence it was being used for military purposes.

The UN investigators concluded that the missile type was imprecise and "could not be directed at a specific military objective." They found reasonable grounds to believe the US carried out the attack, noting that it alone possessed PrSM missiles among the belligerents.

Washington has denied conducting a strike in Lamerd and disputed reports identifying the weapon as a PrSM. Yet its denial is contradicted by the reported weapon signature, the nature of the damage and the mission's broader assessment of the available evidence.

President Donald Trump has claimed that the Minab school was not intentionally targeted. The White House previously said the investigation was ongoing and that no final conclusions had been reached.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has declared that the US military would "never target civilian targets." Such a declaration is not an answer to the evidence assembled by the UN mission, nor to the corpses of schoolchildren and civilians killed in Minab and Lamerd.

The Pentagon has both denied carrying out a strike on Lamerd and continues to withhold information necessary for independent bodies and the public.

After the UN findings became public, White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly denounced the Human Rights Council as an institution that had "accomplished nothing for human rights while spouting unserious nonsense for decades." She asserted that "the only party in this conflict that has committed war crimes is the Iranian regime."

The cynics in the White House have refused to answer a single factual question about whether Tomahawks hit Minab or whether the school was struck twice or why it was selected as a target or why no military use has been identified or why Washington will not publish the results of its own inquiry. This is the unmistakable silence of the guilty.

The UN report is a devastating exposure of the war crimes committed at the beginning of the US war against Iran. Its documentation of attacks on civilian facilities strips away the official propaganda that the assault was a limited or defensive operation aimed solely at military targets.

The war was not launched over concern for the Iranian population or, as Trump stated in his late-night address at the outset, to ensure Iran "will never have a nuclear weapon." The Iran war is part of Washington's broader effort to reassert US dominance in the Middle East, secure strategic control over a region central to the world's energy supplies and transport routes and subordinate Iran to US global hegemony.

The killing of children in Minab and Lamerd is an outcome from these predatory aims. When the wars' objectives are global geopolitical domination, civilian life becomes an expendable obstacle, and atrocities are followed by false narratives.

The barbarism unleashed against Iran and the stonewalling by the White House over US war crimes find a corollary in the assault on democratic rights within the US. The armed federal agents who killed Renée Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis—one month before the missiles rained down in Minab and Lamerd—have not been arrested or charged, and the shooters are being protected by the US Justice Department. The Trump administration is simultaneously blocking the investigation of war crimes in Iran and the murder of citizens by federal agents on the streets of American cities.

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