
UNHRC 57th Session
Submission of the Institute for NGO Research:
UN Must Intervene on Flawed Special Procedure Mandate

The Special Rapporteur on the “situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967” is a UN mechanism that is marred by extreme bias, selectivity, and absence of credibility. In contrast to every other country-specific mandate that must be renewed by the UN Human Rights Council on an annual basis, the Rapporteur is the only indefinite mandate, as noted on OHCHR’s website, enduring “[until the end of the Israeli occupation](#).” In addition, it is the only mandate that is manifestly selective and partial, aimed at examining alleged violations by Israel alone. Palestinian violations and systematic atrocities committed by the PA and Palestinian terror groups are systematically excluded.

According to the selection criteria for Special Rapporteur, the basic requirements for the role include knowledge of international human rights and humanitarian law, experience in the field of human rights, and credibility in advancing human rights and peace. In addition, under [Human Rights Council resolution 5/1](#), Special Rapporteurs are required to exhibit personal integrity, expertise, independence, impartiality, and objectivity.

In contrast to these stipulations, the position of Special Rapporteur has mainly been filled by individuals (save 1) with extensive histories of anti-Israel animus and who have used their platform for activism and to promote extreme hostility towards Israel, including boycott campaigns, and antisemitism.

While the UNHRC must give importance to impartiality and objectivity when selecting its experts, the current Special Rapporteur is the very opposite.

Antisemitism

As noted above, under [Resolution 5/1](#), Special Rapporteurs are required to exhibit personal integrity, expertise, independence, impartiality, and objectivity. These criteria require that Special Rapporteurs and other mandate holders uphold the principles of universal human rights and refrain from the dissemination or aiding and abetting of expressions of discrimination, including antisemitism, promotion of violence, or incitement to violence.

Language invoked in public statements and in the reports drafted under this mandate often incorporate discourse that could be construed as antisemitism. For example, reports of previous mandate holders have referred to Israel and its actions in the Arab-Israeli conflict as “avaricious,” “rapacious,” and “pathological” – unprecedented and entirely subjective language that is well beyond standard UN condemnations of Israel. Such slurs evoke the classic antisemitic trope of describing Jews as “[greedy](#)” that has been used for centuries, and was particularly visible in Nazi propaganda. Invoking rhetoric of “pathologies of power,” another antisemitic canard, ascribes “causes and effects of diseases” to the behavior of the Jewish State. Throughout history, Jews have been accused of being [psychologically variant](#) or “pathological.”

The current Special Rapporteur has also utilized antisemitic themes and imagery to demonize the Jewish people and the State of Israel. She has drawn false comparisons between Israel’s actions and the Holocaust. In May 2021, the Special Rapporteur [equated the “Nakba” to the Holocaust](#), stating that “Just as tragic, terrible, unspeakable, is the tragedy that befell the Jewish people with the Shoah, so for the Palestinians, the Nakba represents the crumbling of the connective tissue of a people.” In January 2024, following the brutal Hamas atrocities of October 7 and the Israeli defensive response, the Special Rapporteur [claimed in an interview](#) that “what happened in the Holocaust, and the persecution of the Jews people in Europe, and the genocide that happened, must not be repeated by Israel against others. ... What I am seeing today reminds me of that tragic experience ... what we need to understand is that this is similar to what happened in the Holocaust.” This is a form of Holocaust inversion.

In July 2024, in a response to a former UN OHCHR official who tweeted “History is always watching.” adding two pictures drawing a comparison between Hitler and the Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, the Special Rapporteur [responded](#) “This is precisely what I was thinking today.” Following [criticism expressed by the Israeli MFA](#) regarding her response, the Special Rapporteur [tweeted](#), “The Memory of the #Holocaust remains intact and sacred thank (sic) to people of conscience worldwide. Institutional rants and outburst of selective moral outrage will not stop the course of #Justice, which is finally in motion. #ICC #ICJ #NeverAgain #StopGenocideInGazaNow #EndApartheid.”

Troubling Statements Regarding Terrorism

Paragraph 11 of the [Manual for Special Procedures](#) states that mandate-holders must be independent and impartial. The Manual further clarifies that in situations where “a peace process is under way,” the mandate-holder should not be seen to be taking sides with one party to the conflict. Additionally, Resolution 5/1 establishing special procedures calls for “Equal attention should be paid to all human rights.” Yet, despite these directives, the mandate holder’s statements and activities indicate a complete lack of impartiality and are not in keeping with human rights principles.

For example, in the aftermath of the horrific point-blank execution of an Israeli mother and her two daughters, the Rapporteur [tweeted](#) on April 8, 2023, “Israel has a right to defend itself, but can’t claim it when it comes to the people it oppresses [or] whose land it colonizes.” Not only was this remark morally tone-deaf and grossly inappropriate for one appointed as a UN human rights expert, these words are readily interpreted to legitimate and grant immunity for the deliberate murder of Israeli civilians by Palestinian terrorists.

In November 2022, the Rapporteur [participated in a conference](#) organized by Hamas, that also [featured](#) senior members of Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), including Hamas’s Basem Naim, Ghazi Hamad, Isam al-Da’alis and Abdul Latif al-Qanu, and PIJ’s Ahmad al-Mudallal and Khadr Habib. In her speech, the Special Rapporteur [declared](#), “You have a right to resist this occupation.” The decision to participate in such events with extremist actors, suggests highly questionable judgment.

In February 2024, after French President Emmanuel Macron referred to the October 7 massacre as “the largest antisemitic massacre of our century,” the Special Rapporteur [claimed](#), “The ‘greatest antisemitic massacre of our century’? No, Mr. @EmmanuelMacron. The victims of 7/10 were not killed because of their Judaism but in response to Israel’s oppression.”

In August 2024, immediately following an IDF strike which killed at least 19 terrorists, the Special Rapporteur [tweeted](#), “Gaza: In the largest and most shameful concentration camp of the 21st century, Israel is genociding the Palestinians one neighborhood at the time, one hospital at the time, one school at the time, one refugee camp at the time, one 'safe zone' at the time. With US and European weapons...May the Palestinians forgive us for our collective inability to protect them, honoring the most basic meaning of intl law.”

Invented History

In January 2021, the Rapporteur [posted a link](#) to the movie “Jenin, Jenin,” writing “Jenin, Jenin in Italian. Don’t miss this one.” Mohammed Bakri’s “Jenin, Jenin” suggests that Israel committed a massacre in Jenin during Israel’s 2002 invasion of Jenin, but [known](#) to be full of [false claims](#). According to [Human Rights Watch](#), it “found no evidence to sustain claims of massacres or large-scale extrajudicial executions by the IDF in Jenin refugee camp.” [Multiple](#) Israeli [courts](#) have found that the movie is “not based on any factual basis, not even a minimal one,” “misleading,” and “contains libels.”

Additionally, in a report prepared for the [77th Session of the General Assembly](#) (A/77/356), the Rapporteur fabricated a “millenia” long history of a “native Palestinian Arab population” and Palestinian “indigeneity”, while erasing the Jewish origins in and connection to the region, and falsely claiming that Jewish presence consisted of “largely European Jewish settlers and refugees from Europe.”

Conclusion

These examples highlight just some of the ways in which the mandate for the “situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967” has been executed in violation of Resolutions 5/1 and 5/2. There are many more.

The Special Rapporteur has consistently minimized and negated Israel’s right to self-defense against Palestinian terrorism. She has whitewashed terrorists as “human rights defenders,” abusing this framework. The Special Rapporteur herself must be held accountable for her role in inflaming the conflict. By denying Israel’s right to self-defense against terrorism, and whitewashing Palestinian atrocities and mass slaughter, the Special Rapporteur ultimately emboldens and encourages terrorist organizations and violent acts against Israel, such as what occurred on October 7.

It is imperative that the way in which this mandate has been carried out, from the appointments process through its implementation, must be reassessed and reformed. We therefore call on the Presidency of the Council and the Special Procedures Coordination Committee to convene an immediate comprehensive audit of this mechanism.