

The background of the cover features a large, circular United Nations emblem mounted on a wall with a vertical wood grain. The emblem is made of a light-colored material, possibly metal or wood, and depicts a world map centered on the Atlantic Ocean, surrounded by a laurel wreath. The wall itself is a warm, golden-brown color. In the bottom right corner, a small portion of a wooden desk and a chair is visible.

UN, Germany and Antisemitism after October 7

**Civil society Situation Report
on Antisemitism #14**



Bildungs- und Aktionswochen gegen Antisemitismus



Anne Frank.

ANNE FRANK ZENTRUM

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The photo was taken on December 4, 2024, during a session of the UN General Assembly that addressed a resolution promoting an international conference on a two-state solution.

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Foreword by Dr. Felix Klein

At first glance, readers of this Situation Report may wonder what international politics has to do with hatred against Jews here in Germany. And that's a valid question. The answer is complex and, thankfully, thoroughly explained by the authors of the *Amadeu Antonio Foundation*. In a nutshell: Antisemitic patterns of thought, when applied to Israel, are reflected in many United Nations bodies and have consequences for Jews around the world, and in Germany no less. The unequal treatment in the UN of the State of Israel – perceived as collective representation of the Jewish people – can be regarded as exemplary, in turn reinforcing antisemitic behavior towards the Jewish community in Germany. In other words, anti-Jewish agitation in the United Nations contributes to hatred of Jews across the country.

Germany, in particular, bears a unique responsibility for the safety and well-being of Jewish communities – not only as a federal government, but as an entire society. This responsibility is reflected globally, in the often-emphasized *raison d'état vis-à-vis Israel*, and domestically, toward Jewish people living in Germany. Given that both the shared destiny of the Jewish people and the hatred directed at them know no national borders, it is only logical to consider our overarching responsibility for Jewish communities and our commitment to Israel's *raison d'état* in conjunction. Especially since the horrific terrorist attack

BMI / Henning Schacht



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by *Hamas* and its allies on 7 October 2023, Israel-related antisemitism has become the dominant form of hatred towards Jewish people across nearly all areas of society in Germany.

In light of this, I am grateful to the *Amadeu Antonio Foundation* for dedicating this year's Situation Report to the topic of antisemitism and the dark part of the UN – marking the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. To effectively combat antisemitism in Germany, we need to understand its global dimensions. Through this report, the *Amadeu Antonio Foundation* contributes to that understanding, once again providing important material that is accessible to everyone in the fight against antisemitism.

Introduction

It began with a lie. The alleged bombing of the Al-Ahli al-Arabi hospital in Gaza City by the Israeli Air Force on October 17, 2023, was a moment that opened the flood gates for hatred towards Israel. While many had remained reserved in the ten days prior to the horrific events of October 7, the alleged destruction of the hospital offered an opportunity to finally demonize Israel. The Health Ministry of Gaza run by *Hamas* immediately placed blame on Israel, reporting hundreds of victims.¹ The news spread like wildfire. On social media, many considered the case to be crystal clear. Even UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed his outrage on X just hours later, uncritically citing the *Hamas* casualty figures without verification.²

The problem: This information was false. But, by that point, it was too late. Despite the fact that several independent investigations – and ultimately a report from the independent NGO *Human Rights Watch* – contradicted the *Hamas* propaganda, revised down the casualty figures,³ identified the location of the explosion to be a parking lot in front of the hospital⁴ and found that a misfired rocket from *Islamic Jihad* as the cause of the destruction, it was all irrelevant. Public opinion had already been formed⁵ – and it persists to this day.

The role of the *World Health Organization* (WHO) is particularly critical here. This UN body specialized in coordinating public health measures neither corrected the misinformation nor initiated its own investigations to verify what had actually taken place. This omission contributed to the lasting portrayal of Israel as a brutal aggressor that razes hospitals to the ground.

Protests broke out that same evening, including in Germany.⁶ Just a few hours after the false report went viral on TikTok, several hundred people gathered in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin. After the

rally was dispersed, clashes broke out with the police. When demonstrators attempted to approach the nearby Holocaust memorial, police had to intervene to protect the site.⁷

To this day, the exact course of the disinformation campaign remains unclear. Who initially planted the false report and where? Who spread it and mobilized others? How did the dynamic between the press, social media posts and mobilizations on the streets unfold? This event illustrates just how quickly false reports on social media can become a security issue. The case is a prime example of disinformation and viral antisemitism – one to which the UN has also contributed.

Since October 7, the UN has repeatedly made headlines: UNRWA staff were directly involved in the massacre, UN agencies remained silent for too long in response to sexualized violence that day, Israeli hostages report having been held captive in UN buildings, representatives accuse Israel of genocide, and resolutions against Israel have been passed again and again in the UN General Assembly – without ever explicitly condemning *Hamas* by name.

The bitter conclusion: the UN has failed in the face of October 7.

Rather than putting out the flames, it has at times poured fuel to the fire. The UN's actions have consequences for Jewish communities in Germany as well as initiatives and organizations critical of antisemitism, making this the focus of Situation Report #14. Jewish people feel abandoned by the organization. Dr. Josef Schuster, President of the *Central Council of Jews in Germany*, described Germany's vote in the UN General Assembly a few weeks after October 7, 2023 a "disappointment for Jews in Germany".⁸

In the interview for this Situation Report, Josef Schuster explains:

“The events after October 7, 2023 the UN’s failures in responding to Hamas terrorism, the overt hostility towards Israel that has been revealed within some UN institutions and even individual entanglements with terrorist groups must prompt a more realistic view of the UN in Germany. The naivety and credulity with which both the German government as well as our society treat the positions and decisions of an institution that consists mainly of authoritarian or dictatorial states must come to an end. We need greater awareness of what the UN is – and of what it is not – which is why I am also grateful to the *Amadeu Antonio Foundation* for this report. This must also be reflected in government action, particularly in regard to voting on resolutions that are hostile to Israel or those that relativize the terror committed by Hamas, or the outflow of German taxpayers’ money to UN structures that cannot rule out support for terrorist groups.”

In an interview for this report, Sharon Adler speaks of her personal disappointment with the feminist movement and various UN bodies after October 7: “I was incredibly disappointed by the silence of these large organizations. Solidarity must not be a question of identity. Anyone who condemns sexualized violence must do so consistently – regardless of political or ideological convictions.” She also shares how a lack of solidarity with the victims of sexualized violence on October 7 has enormously diminished her personal safe spaces.

Dina Rovner, Legal Advisor of the non-governmental organization *UN Watch* has been critically examining the activities and resolutions of the UN for years. In the interview, she states: “Ultimately, the UN promotes the propaganda of *Hamas* instead of presenting the

actual situation at hand.” She also classifies the real-politik consequences of the UN’s anti-Israeli bias as “serious”.

There is no doubt that the founding of the UN marked a milestone that offered hope for stable, transnational cooperation. In the UN Charter, adopted exactly 80 years ago on June 26, 1945, one of the goals is “friendly cooperation among nations”⁹. Yet this already highlights a core issue: The UN is not a transnational but an international organization, and therefore merely a sum of its parts – no more, but also no less.

In 2024, only 89 of the 193 UN member states are considered democratic, and only 25 are considered “fully” democratic.¹⁰ The UN’s hostile treatment of Israel therefore comes as little surprise – reflective of a history that has only intensified since October 7. This is the result of the fact that some member states represent openly anti-Israel agendas and are able to push these through with impunity, as underlined by numerous resolutions after October 7. And yet, despite its commitment to Israel’s *raison d’état*, Germany’s voting behavior has not shown a clear stance – neither *for* Israeli security interests nor *against* resolutions hostile to Israel. Although UN resolutions of the General Assembly are not legally binding, they hold highly symbolic value.

Efforts to combat antisemitism are hindered by the UN’s anti-Israel bias. Moreover, antisemitic mobilization in Germany after October 7 illustrates how this tendency fuels antisemitic narratives and sometimes even incites incidents in Germany. In many cases, the UN acts as an enabler for hostility towards Israel. Ultimately, this posture is supported and legitimized by the anti-Israeli actions of this supposedly – and always thus idealized – organization of “integrity”: a transnational, non-partisan, ostensibly objective and neutral defender of human rights, founded in the aftermath of two world wars and significantly shaped by the horrors of the Holocaust.

Eighty years after its founding, Situation Report #14 analyzes the anti-Israeli actions of UN bodies and representatives. We place this hostility towards Israel in the context of antisemitic mobilization in Germany while also shedding light on Germany’s role in the UN.

Key observations

1. Resolution: Hostility towards Israel

The UN, particularly its General Assembly, reflects the sum of its parts. The majority of UN member states are autocratic regimes ruled by dictators who reject democracy, the rule of law and human rights. These majorities have shaped the UN's Middle East policy for decades through various anti-Israel resolutions. An institution whose influence is based on voting can only be as principled as its voting members. This dynamic contributed to the UN's failure after October 7.

2. Inverted reality

While Israel faces delegitimization, *Hamas* is downplayed and its atrocities relativized. No UN General Assembly resolution has ever explicitly condemned *Hamas* by name, and a proposal to this effect was rejected shortly after October 7. UN representatives often frame Palestinian terror as resistance and do not recognize *Hamas* as a terrorist organization, which reflects the trivialization of terror heard across streets in Germany.

3. The UN as a source of legitimacy

The antisemitic attitudes of high-ranking elected officials and the UN's decades-long anti-Israel bias provide legitimacy for anti-Zionist ideology. As a perceived moral authority of integrity, the UN sets cues for various political milieus – including in Germany. From accusations of genocide to the denial of sexualized violence on October 7 to calls for a right of return, anti-Israeli activists can cite the UN as a source of legitimacy.

4. Destabilizing the Middle East

Many Jewish communities feel disappointed and even abandoned by the UN. They view the UN as driving regional destabilization in the Middle East in various ways: through unilateral resolutions, actions that foment conflict over Palestinian refugees or through UNRWA school textbooks that have repeatedly been shown to reproduce antisemitic narratives.

5. Ineffective *raison d'état*

Germany has systematically voted against Israel or abstained in voting on UN General Assembly resolutions relating to Israel and Palestine since October 7 – even via votes completely opposed to its frequently cited support for Israel's *raison d'état*. Concurrently, Germany is one of the largest donors of the much-criticized UNRWA, highlighting the disconnect between Germany's voting behavior and foreign policy in the UN and the oft-invoked *raison d'état* of Israel.

Timeline: The UN after October 7

October 7, 2023

Francesca Albanese, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, X:

"Today's violence must be put in context."

October 24, 2023

UN Secretary-General António Guterres

In the UN Security Council, Guterres speaks of "56 years of suffocating occupation" and that "the attacks by *Hamas* did not take place in a vacuum".

October 28, 2023

First ceasefire resolution passed

The resolution calls for an "immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in the Gaza Strip, without explicitly referring to the terror committed by *Hamas* on October 7, leading Germany to abstain. *Hamas* supports the resolution.

December 29, 2023

"Genocide trial" against Israel begins

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) initiates proceedings in South Africa against Israel, in which the latter is accused of genocide – a process expected to take years.

February 14, 2024

UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths plays down *Hamas*

In an interview, the then UN Emergency Relief Coordinator claimed that *Hamas* was not a terrorist organization, but a political movement.

March 26, 2024

Albanese's report "Anatomy of a Genocide" is published

This UN report seeks to prove that Israel is intent on carrying out genocide. The report is riddled with anti-Israel and antisemitic narratives, with left-wing groups drawing on the report as argument for their own antisemitic narratives.

April 18, 2024

Palestine's admission as a full member of the UN fails

The United States vetoes the UN Security Council's recommendation to admit Palestine to the UN.

April 22, 2024

Report on the UNRWA published

The so-called Colonna report states there is no evidence of UNRWA employees taking part in the October 7 attack, sparking sharp criticism.

August 5, 2024

Dismissal of several UNRWA employees

Following a further internal investigation, nine UNRWA employees are dismissed.

Ineffective raison d'état and reference point for anti-Israel hostility: The UN and Germany

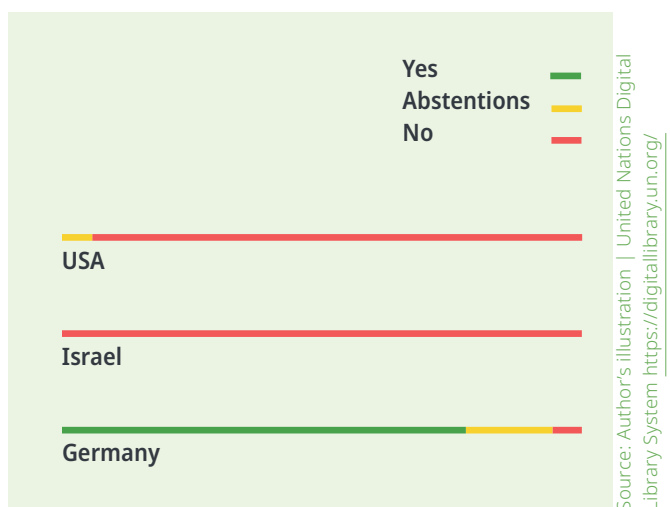
"This is a black day for the UN and for humanity"¹¹, laments Israel's UN ambassador Gilad Erdan. On 27 October 2023, just three weeks after the *Hamas* massacre, the UN General Assembly adopts an anti-Israel resolution. The resolution, approved by 121 member states with 14 against and Germany abstaining,¹² calls for an "immediate, durable and sustainable"¹³ humanitarian truce – but without mentioning the words "*Hamas*" or "hostages".

While Israel and the United States reject the resolution, Germany choose to abstain.¹⁴ *Hamas* explicitly praises the resolution.¹⁵ Particularly explosive: Proposed additions that explicitly mention *Hamas* and condemn October 7 were rejected, failing to reach a two-thirds majority.¹⁶

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock explained that Germany abstained because the resolution did not clearly cite the *Hamas* terror or demand the release of all hostages clearly enough.¹⁷ Ron Prosor, Israel's ambassador to Germany, criticized the abstention as "not enough".¹⁸ Additionally, the president of the *Central Council of Jews in Germany*, Josef Schuster, said that the vote was a "disappointment".¹⁹ The "clear stance"²⁰ promised by a Foreign Office article on X on the day of the vote was not reflected in the abstention.

The table below compares all UN General Assembly resolutions adopted between October 7, 2023 and the end of 2024 relating to the Israel-Palestine conflict with Germany's voting behavior as well as that of Israel and the United States – the latter being a key ally of the Jewish state, particularly as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Voting Behavior: UN General Assembly



Voting behavior of the United States, Israel, and Germany on the 18 United Nations General Assembly resolutions concerning the Israel-Palestine context in the period from October 7, 2023, to December 31, 2024.

Systematically against Israel

In most cases, the content of the resolutions is marked by strong one-sidedness: Israel is said to damage, injure, exploit and destroy. Israel ("the occupying power") is condemned and confronted with demands. Rarely are "all parties" involved in the Israel-Palestine conflict addressed. Never are *Hamas* and *Hezbollah*, the Islamist regime in Iran and Qatar mentioned. The regime in Iran supports *Hamas* with weapons and funding, while Qatar is accused of being close to *Hamas*. For example, *Hamas* leader Ismail Haniya (who has since been killed) lived an undisturbed luxurious life in Doha for several years, the capital of Qatar.²¹

The resolutions tend to strengthen the position of the Palestinian territories and the Palestinians. The "right of the Palestinian people to self-determination" is frequently emphasized, combined with the call for Israel to respect the "right to self-determination". Several

resolutions are dedicated to financially bolstering the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

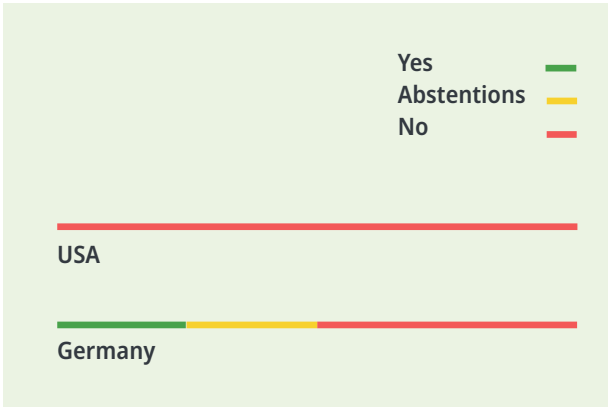
These resolutions are introduced by the *Organization of Islamic Cooperation* (OIC), an international association of Muslim-dominated states. The OIC has 57 members, all of which (with the exception of the Palestinian territories) are UN members. These include states such as Iran, Yemen, Qatar, Lebanon and Turkey. The association submits resolutions to the UN General Assembly for vote.

Germany's frequent approval of these resolutions may stem from various motives. For example, reinforcing the UNRWA might appear entirely understandable in light of the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. However, such support, when grated uncritically, means tolerating the antisemitism in UNRWA's educational materials²² or its alleged links with *Hamas*²³. By systematically voting against Israel, as the table shows, Germany tacitly accepts and supports the anti-Israel status quo of the UN General Assembly. This ultimately raises the question of how Germany's voting behavior aligns with its stated *raison d'état* of safeguarding Israel's security.

In 2006, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution to establish the UN Human Rights Council. Israel and the United States voted against its creation, criticizing the low threshold for authoritarian states that systematically suppress human rights to become members of the UN Human Rights Council. A glance at the composition of the body confirms this: the People's Republic of China, for example, is among the 47 members while, in the past, states such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Venezuela, Eritrea and Somalia have held seats.

The UN General Assembly elects the members of the UN Human Rights Council by an absolute majority for a term of three years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms. Germany has been represented on the UN Human Rights Council since 2019, with its membership ending in 2025. In the resolutions adopted by the UN Human Rights Council since October 7, 2023 regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict, a certain degree of restraint is noticeable among Germany's voting behavior.

**Voting Behavior:
UN Human Rights Council**



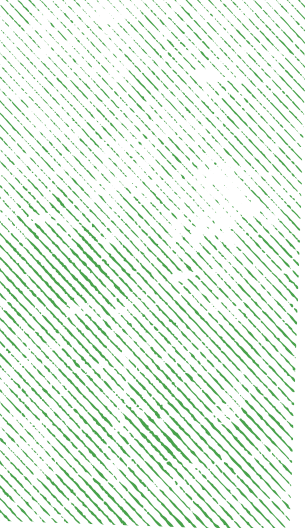
Voting behavior on the four United Nations Human Rights Council resolutions concerning the Israel-Palestine context in the period from October 7, 2023, to December 31, 2024.

Source: Author's illustration | Report of the United Nations Council 2024

German organizations with an anti-Israel agenda – supported by the UN

What UN bodies address, decide and condemn in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict has repercussions – not only in the Middle East, but also in Germany. Political and religious organizations use the UN's anti-Israel agenda in their arguments to substantiate their own positions against the Israeli state. Its agenda comes to serve their own, and the use of UN criticism can be observed in various areas.

When a UN body denounces German or Israeli actions in the conflict, Islamist Instagram accounts such as *@generation_islam* (approx. 73,000 followers), *@islambotschaft* (approx. 68,000 followers) and *@realitaetislam* (approx. 34,000 followers) respond with corresponding messages. Nonetheless, a certain degree of skepticism towards the UN can also be observed. "A useless tool", declared



@islambotschaft October 7, 2024, lamenting that the international organization had failed to halt what they alleged to be a genocide against Palestinians.

In order to prevent such a genocide, Germany must align its foreign policy with “international law standards, as confirmed by the *International Court of Justice* (ICJ), among others”. This is what the left-wing party *MERA25*, the German branch of *DiEM25*, demands in its party program.²⁴ Germany, like 146 UN member states, should “recognize Palestine as a state”. The UN, it says, should “interfere in the internal affairs of its members when they violate international law and human rights”.

Together with anti-Zionist groups, *DiEM25* organized a conference entitled “Reclaiming the Discourse: Palestine, Justice and the Power of Truth” on February 18, 2025 at the Berlin offices of the left-wing newspaper *Junge Welt* (see more in the text “Rhetoric of superlatives: the UN and the genocide accusation against Israel” in this Situation Report). Francesca Albanese, the controversial *UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967*, gave a keynote speech. This example illustrates how anti-Israel voices are integrated into the UN’s own agenda.

In late December 2024, the daily newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) published a guest article by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk. In the article, Türk distorts the war between

Israel and Hamas to support his one-sided argument, describing the atrocities committed by Hamas as “[...] serious violations of international law”, which not only he, “but also the entire United Nations system [...] has repeatedly condemned [...]”.²⁵ As we demonstrate, such condemnations were either delayed or did not occur at all – and especially not in official resolutions, begging the question: Where exactly were they?

Due to its anti-Israel framing, the FAZ guest article was picked up in the magazine of the *Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany* (MLPD), *Rote Fahne*, with parts of it published there a day later.²⁶ As such, a comment by the UN High Commissioner unites the FAZ with the magazine of the MLPD, which is monitored by Germany’s domestic intelligence agency.²⁷

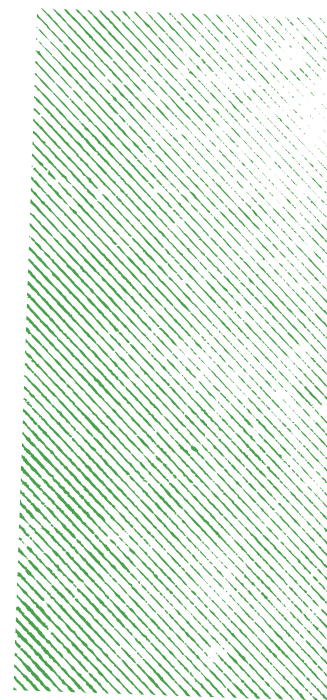
Extreme right actors between anti-Zionism and solidarity with Israel

The far right has no such proximity to UN bodies or protagonists. However, when the UN takes a stance against Israel, right-wing extremists seize the opportunity. *Deutsche Stimme*, the house magazine of the far-right party *Die Heimat* (formerly NPD), ran the headline: “Israel targeted by the UN, but unconditionally supported by Germany”.²⁸ The article illustrates the function that the UN fulfills in parts of the extreme right: it is positioned as a moral authority wielded against Israel and Germany, turning this international organization as a tool for spreading Israel hatred.

A similar message appeared on the website of the far-right party *Der Dritte Weg*. When Israel planned a ground offensive in southern Lebanon following attacks by *Hezbollah*, the party referred to a UN resolution as a basis for criticism.²⁹ Amid the anti-Israel protests on German streets, *Der Dritte Weg* took up the Zionism=racism resolution from the 1970s to emphasize that Germans must “have the right to protest against Zionism”.³⁰

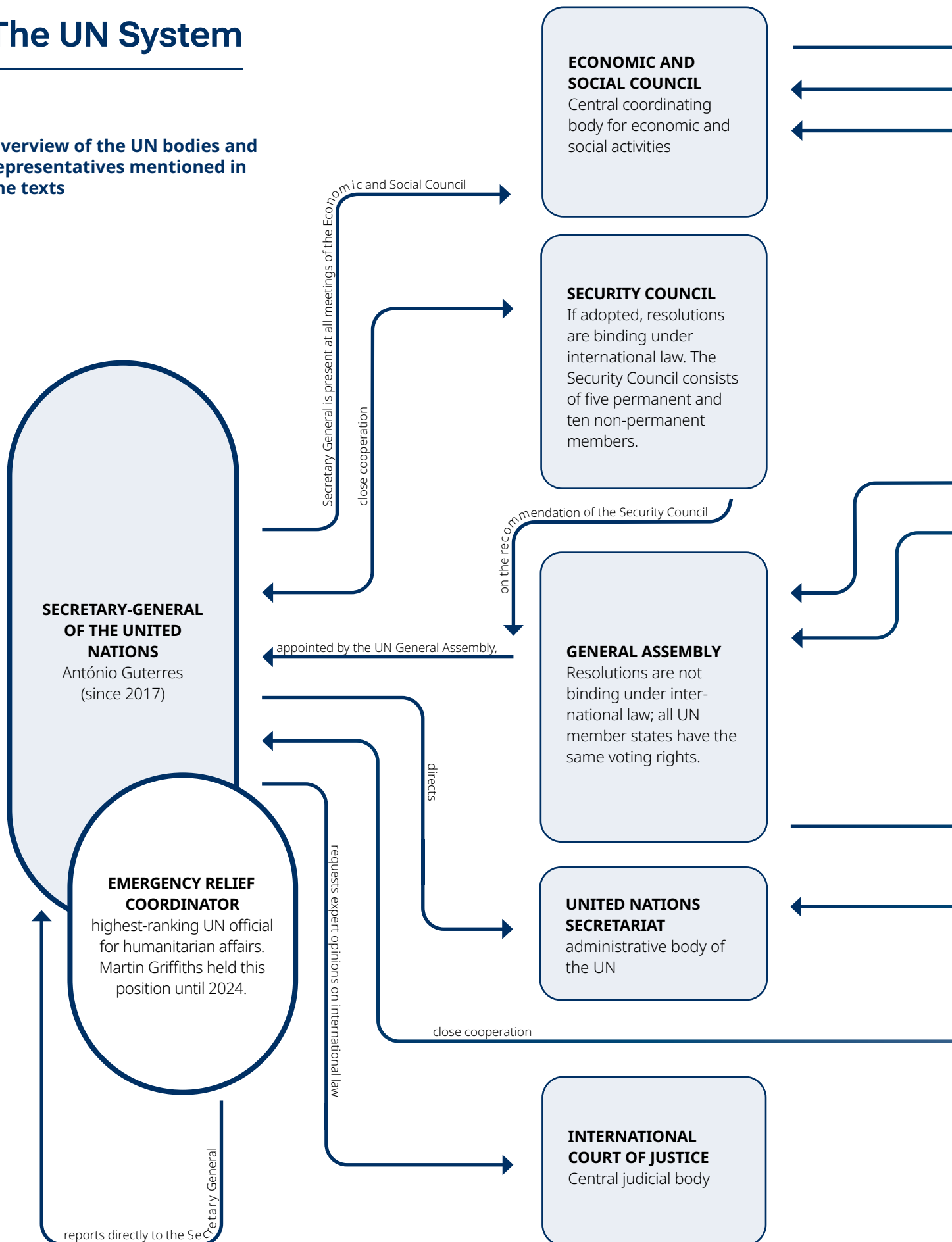
The *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) is an exception within the extreme right. Since October 7, 2023, the party has called for a cease in German payments to UNRWA via several motions.³¹ One motion from November 18, 2024 even called for UNRWA to be “urgently put under review”. These demands were based on antisemitic content in UN educational materials and the personal connections between *Hamas* and UNRWA.

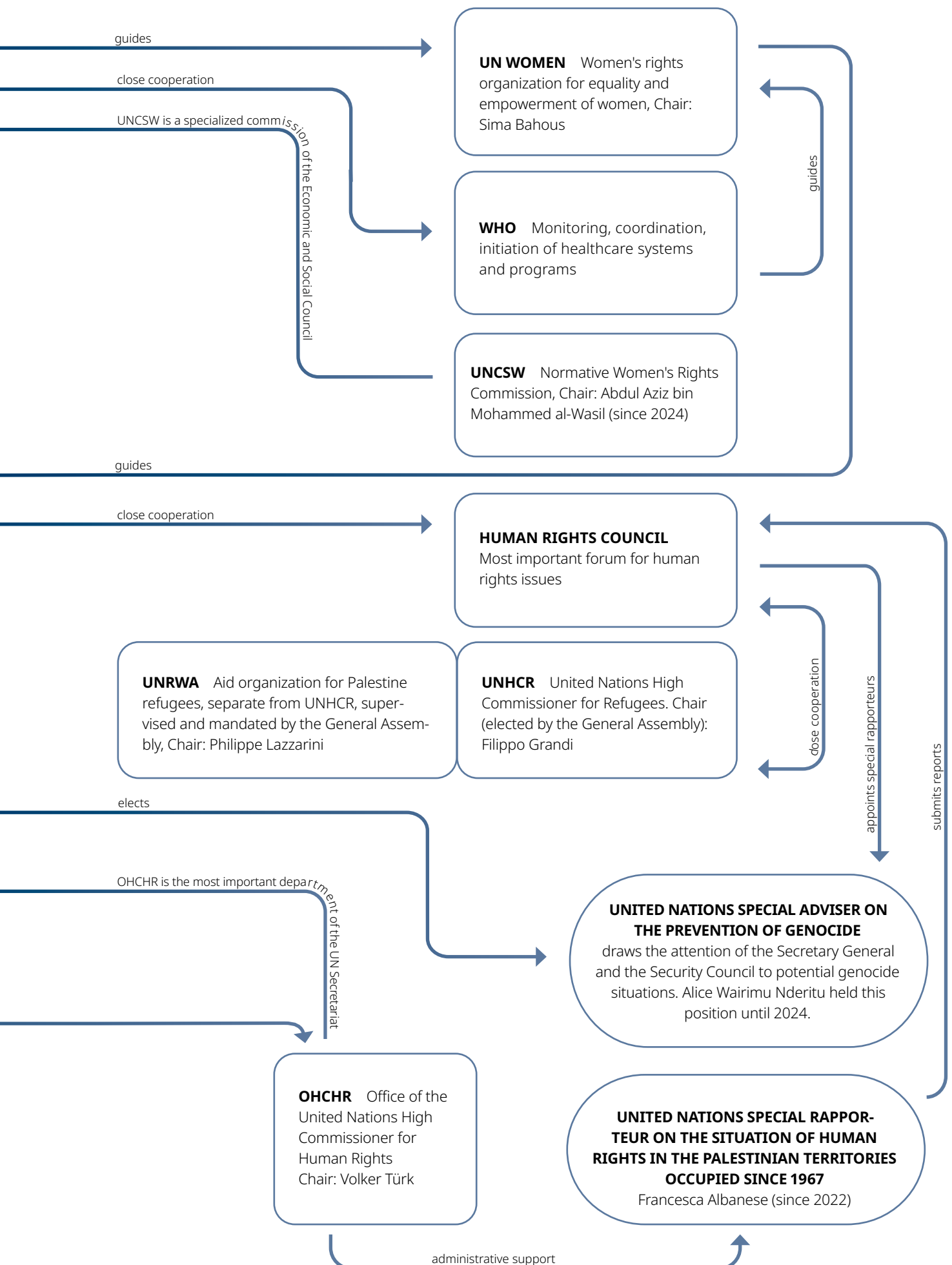
However, AfD's solidarity with Israel must be seen in the context of the party's Islamophobic world view: Israel is interpreted as a bulwark against Islam. It is believed that what weakens the Jewish state strengthens Islamic forces in the Middle East. The instrumental nature of solidarity with Israel became clear, for example, when AfD member of parliament Beatrix von Storch, the group's antisemitism commissioner at the time, called for the deportation of *Hamas* perpetrators to the Jewish state after October 7.³² In a viral video on TikTok, AfD party leader Alice Weidel equated *Hamas* terrorists with Muslims.³³



The UN System

Overview of the UN bodies and representatives mentioned in the texts





"The UN never considers Israel's security needs"

Interview with Dina Rovner (UN Watch)

This Interview was conducted on March 13, 2025.

Some senior UN officials claim there's no such thing as terrorist groups named in international law. What's your perspective on this, especially given your professional experience?

Dina Rovner: This is a significant issue, particularly in relation to UN Watch's work with UNRWA. UNRWA claims to vet employees against the UN sanctions list, but *Hamas* isn't on this list. Consequently, the UN doesn't consider *Hamas* membership as grounds for denying employment. For the UN – *Hamas* is not a terrorist organization.

UN officials openly admit this. For instance, Martin Griffiths, the former UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, stated, "*Hamas* is not a terrorist group for us. It's a political movement." The UN often refers to *Hamas* as "Palestinian armed groups" or even "de facto authorities in Gaza," which lends legitimacy to the organization.

There are no UN resolutions or reports that refer to *Hamas* as a terrorist organization. The UN needs to start recognizing *Hamas* as such and screen its employees for *Hamas* membership, which is crucial given the negative implications we've seen with UNRWA.

Why doesn't the UN have an official terrorist list?

The UN terrorist list is determined by UN Security Council designations. If an organization hasn't been designated by the Security Council, it won't be considered a



Dina Rovner

Dina Rovner serves as Legal Advisor at the Swiss NGO *UN Watch*, an organization that has critically engaged with the United Nations since 1993.

terrorist organization by the UN. To change this, a country would need to bring a resolution to the UN Security Council requesting that *Hamas* be designated as a terrorist organization.

How has the nature of antisemitism changed since October 7th, and how has the UN contributed to this?

Since October 7, we've witnessed an explosion of antisemitism globally.

The UN contributes to this through its treatment of Israel. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of Antisemitism includes three examples relevant to the UN's actions. First: Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, exemplified by the UN's apartheid allegations against Israel. Second: Applying double standards by requiring behavior of Israel not expected of other democratic nations, seen in the UN's disproportionate condemnation of Israel. And finally: Drawing comparisons between contemporary Israeli policies and those of the Nazis, which some UN officials have done.

How do you assess the impact of UN antisemitism internationally?

The impact is significant. The UN legitimizes false claims and fails to provide counter-information or facts. Ultimately, the UN promotes *Hamas* propaganda instead of presenting the factual situation. It's important to understand that no other country is subjected to this kind of treatment at the UN.

This process often starts with biased reports from UN bodies like the Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry. These reports have led to General Assembly resolutions and eventually to opinions from the International Court of Justice, like the July 2024 Advisory Opinion declaring the Israeli occupation illegal and demanding that Israel unilaterally withdraw from those territories "as rapidly as possible." These opinions can then result in calls for arms embargoes, boycotts, and reparations against Israel.

Also, the apartheid and genocide campaigns against Israel distort reality and demonize the country. This takes global attention away from other important international crises. When the UN singles out Israel for condemnation while ignoring the worst violators, it fuels antisemitism by sending the message that Israel isn't just bad, it's the worst.

How does this treatment of Israel in the UN compare to other global conflicts?

The disparity is stark. For instance, Russia invaded Ukraine in violation of the UN Charter and occupies parts of Ukraine, including Crimea. Yet in 2024, the UN General Assembly adopted only one resolution on Russia compared to 17 on Israel. Similarly, Turkey's occupation of parts of Syria has not received any UN condemnation. There hasn't been a single UN resolution or commission of inquiry on that issue.

Iran's activities, including financing terrorist organizations across the Middle East and its controversial nuclear program, receive far less attention. Ironically, Israel is the only country that the UN criticizes annually for nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, not Iran.

UN General assembly resolutions are not legally binding, yet there are political statements. What does it say about the UN?

General assembly resolutions are not legally binding because the General assembly is a political body, not a legal one with legal limits.

UN member states have different considerations for adopting resolutions. There's vote trading. They have different political interests. There is a bloc system at the UN where countries align with other like-minded countries in the same geographical or ideological bloc. Israel is naturally in the minority, so when it comes to Israel, there is an automatic anti-Israel majority. So we see how the UN resolutions on Israel are less concerned with facts and law than with the narrative that they're trying to push at this very moment.

In the end it says more about the individual members of the UN and their reasons for voting than the UN itself. However, it also shows how the system is designed. There's a flaw in the design of the system that enables these narratives to get promoted and enables this anti-Israel infrastructure to be perpetuated at the expense of other crises around the world.

Where do you see problems within the UN that endanger Israel's right to exist while potentially giving Palestinian terrorism a "free pass"?

If you look at the genocide libel, you see how the UN turns Israel, the actual victim of a genocidal attack on October 7, into the perpetrator of genocide. It creates this false moral equivalence between Israel and the terror group *Hamas* where Israel, which is fighting a legally justified war of self-defense against the *Hamas* terrorist organization, suddenly becomes on an equal footing with *Hamas*.

At the same time, the UN never takes Israel's security needs into consideration and ignores Palestinian terrorism. When the UN demonizes Israel while failing to hold *Hamas* or *Palestinian Islamic Jihad* accountable for their crimes, it gives Palestinian terrorism a free pass.

What are the long-term implications of these UN actions?

The long-term implications are serious and multifaceted. First, it perpetuates a cycle of bias against Israel in international fora. Each biased report or resolution becomes the basis for future actions, creating a self-reinforcing system of criticism and condemnation.

Second, it undermines the credibility of the UN and international law. When one country is singled out disproportionately, it calls into question the objectivity and fairness of these institutions.

Third, it can have real-world consequences for Israel, including potential economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and security challenges. The calls for arms embargoes and boycotts, if implemented, could significantly impact Israel's ability to defend itself and participate in the global economy.

Lastly, and perhaps most concerning, it contributes to a global climate of antisemitism. By consistently portraying Israel as a unique violator of international norms, it fuels negative perceptions of the world's only Jewish state, which can easily spill over into antisemitic attitudes and actions worldwide.

A historical overview of the UN and Israel

1945

June 26: Signing of the UN Charter

The UN Charter is signed in San Francisco (USA). It is established in response to the Second World War and the failure of the League of Nations. The Charter comes into force in October 1945.

June 26: The International Court of Justice is founded

It is the principal judicial organ of the UN and is based in The Hague (Netherlands).

1946

January 10: First UN General Assembly

The UN General Assembly meets for the first time in London (UK) with delegates from 51 member states.

Shocking entanglements and systemic failure: the UNRWA

Emily Damari smiles at the camera. She holds up her hand, two fingers missing. The photo, taken shortly after her release from captivity in the hands of *Hamas*, circulated globally. Damari was one of the 250 hostages abducted by Islamist Palestinians in the Gaza Strip on October 7, 2023.

Damari lost two fingers after being shot when *Hamas* kidnapped her from Kibbutz Kfar Aza. Damari was one of the hostages to be released in early 2025 as part of an agreement between Israel and *Hamas*. The British-Israeli citizen was held at the mercy of the Islamist terror group for 15 months.

In a phone call with the British Prime Minister, the released Damari reported that she had additionally been held in UNRWA facilities during her imprisonment.³⁴ The UNRWA is the UN's *relief agency for Palestine refugees* in the Middle East. It was founded in 1949 – shortly after the Israeli War of Independence – with the aim of providing aid to Arab refugees and displaced persons at the time. The UNRWA is independent of the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees* (UNHCR), which was founded the following year. Today, the UNRWA runs initiatives such as schools in the Palestinian Territories, funded in part by European contributions. Germany was the UNRWA's second-largest donor in 2023, ahead of the European Union.³⁵



Emily Damari shortly after her release from *Hamas* captivity.

The fact that hostages were held in a UN facility fits into a broader pattern of scandals surrounding the UNRWA. At least nine UNRWA workers were involved in the *Hamas* massacre in Israel on October 7, leading to their dismissal in August 2024.³⁶ The *Israel Defense Forces* (IDF) published several pieces of evidence,³⁷ including a video recording³⁸ showing UNRWA employees abducting the body of the murdered Yonatan Samerano. Another is an audio recording of a phone conversation between UNRWA teachers speaking about female Israeli hostages in misogynistic terms.

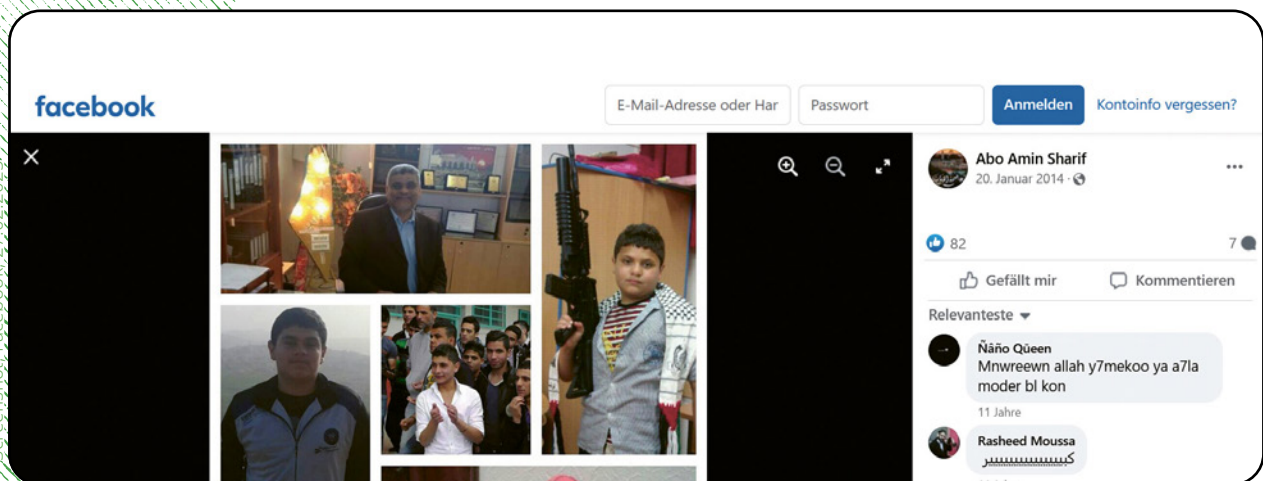
Though not surprising, these revelations were shocking, especially in light of a piece released by the *Wall Street Journal* (01/24) finding that up to 10% of the 13,000 UNRWA employees in the Gaza Strip³⁹ held close ties with *Hamas* or *Islamic Jihad*.⁴⁰ In February 2024, the IDF discovered a *Hamas* tunnel under an UNRWA facility in Gaza City, which contained an IT server room and several weapons.⁴¹

In March 2024, UNRWA school director and head of the UNRWA teachers' union Fatah al-Sharif was suspended from his position at the UN agency. The reason: he was also acting as a high-ranking *Hamas* commander in Lebanon.⁴² Head of UNRWA Philippe Lazzarini, another of al-Sharif's employers, claims to have known nothing about this.⁴³ Even before October 7, al-Sharif made no secret of his involvement with *Hamas*. A photo collage from 2014 on his *Facebook*⁴⁴ shows him grinning in front of UNRWA awards – next to a photo of a boy holding a machine gun and wearing a scarf bearing the *Hamas* emblem.⁴⁵

Well-known problems

The criticism of UNRWA did not begin on October 7. As early as 2017, textbook analyses documented the antisemitic content of the books and teaching materials provided by the agency.⁴⁶ More than half of the children in Gaza are educated in UNRWA schools.⁴⁷ A detailed study by the Israeli NGO *IMPACT-se* (11/23) found that students are not only taught to view jihad and martyrdom as the highest honor, but even math problems are contextualized using the Intifadas.⁴⁸ The material also spreads conspiratorial, antisemitic incitement, such as that portraying Jewish people in a fictional narrative as sex offenders who expose and dishonor Muslim women for amusement. In geography exercises, Israel is erased from the map. The

Screenshot, Facebook, 27.02.2025



al-Sharif's Facebook photo collage shows his connection to Hamas as early as 2014.

study also includes screenshots showing numerous UNRWA employees expressing their joy about October 7 on social media.

Right of return?

A core narrative found in the textbooks is the so-called "right of return" which functions both as a foundation and as a catalyst for the ideological anti-Israel and antisemitic messaging passed on to schoolchildren. The "right of return" refers to the claim that those displaced or who fled during the Israeli state's founding and the subsequent War of Independence have a right to return to their original homes.

December 11, 1948 this "right" was enshrined in UN General Assembly Resolution 194: The resolution, which states that "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date".⁴⁹ However, this is not a legally binding right: neither Resolution 194 nor the later Resolution 3236 carry any legal weight, as both are political declarations without

legal consequence.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Palestinian representatives continue to insist on the right of return as a non-negotiable demand. The underlying argument: without the "Zionist land grab", there would be no "displaced persons". This perspective simplifies a highly complex historical context.

This glorified and one-dimensional view repeatedly emerges at anti-Israel and antisemitic demonstrations in Germany. A commonly heard slogan is: "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" –⁵¹ a saying banned in parts in Germany. It evokes the vision of a complete return and the Palestinian takeover of Israel. The slogan negates Israel's right to exist and refers to the Palestinian population and asserts an exclusive Palestinian claim to the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, omitting the longstanding Jewish presence in the region.

The key is an enduring symbol of the right of return. Many displaced persons took their front door keys with them in the hope of returning soon. The key is passed down through generations and thus functions as a tangible reminder of the lost home. Today, the flight and expulsion is referred to as the 'Nakba', Arabic for 'catastrophe'.

This symbolism also appears at Nakba Day demonstrations in Germany, which take place every year in mid-May. At the demonstration on May 15, 2025, in Berlin, for example, a large cardboard key cutout was on display, decorated with the words "UN Resolution 194." On the back, the outline of Israel is filled with the pattern of a Keffiyeh. Here, the key as a symbol of the right of return merges with the fantasy of erasing Israel from the map.

In June 2024, unknown individuals vandalized the *Berlin University of the Arts* with graffiti referencing this, reading: "Right to return" in combination with "We want 48".⁵² The latter refers to the beginning of

private



Graffiti at the Kühlhaus Berlin in February 2025.



A participant at the Nakba Day demonstration (Berlin), May 2025.

1948 – a time when Israel did not yet exist. The graffiti also included an outline of the Israeli land mass with a key emblazoned on it.

The narrative of the right of return is based on a one-sided historical account of Jewish-Zionist land settlement in the Ottoman Empire from the end of the nineteenth century onward, continuing into the British Mandate territory of Palestine after World War I, and subsequently the founding of the State of Israel. The narrative is also inherently interwoven with the UNRWA refugee status.

A heavy legacy: the UNRWA refugee status

During the period of civil war 1947 until 1948 and the Israeli War of Independence, around 750,000 Arabs fled or were expelled from the area that is now Israel, many settling in the surrounding Arab countries.⁵³ The commemoration of Nakba takes place on May 15, one day after Israel's Independence Day. It was on this day in 1948 that the five surrounding Arab states declared war on the young state of Israel.

The mass exodus of people was the impetus for the establishment of the UNRWA. Initiated in 1948, the UN Relief and Works Agency was officially founded in 1949 and began operations a year later. Arabs who had fled or been displaced were granted UNRWA refugee status, which was specially defined by the UN General Assembly – one that is inherited through a family's male line to this day. As a result, nearly six million⁵⁴ Palestinian refugees are currently registered and receive UNRWA benefits. The practice of inheritable refugee status is contrary to the current Geneva Refugee Convention and the UNHCR's definition of a refugee. Palestinian refugees thus occupy special legal status – with long-lasting implications.

Even after decades of residence, refugees are rarely socially integrated in their host countries. In Germany as well, the legal framework is problematic: UNRWA refugees do not receive official refugee status⁵⁵ and are therefore excluded from, for instance, residence rights, social benefits and access to the labor market.

Another example: Around 200,000 Palestinian refugees live in Lebanon today,⁵⁶ mostly in refugee camps that have since developed into permanent urban districts with their own infrastructure. This owes to the fact that Palestinian residents hardly enjoy any rights in Lebanon: they are not allowed to vote, they cannot own property, they are denied professional career advancement and they have no access to the state education and healthcare system.⁵⁷ This effectively renders them second-class citizens.

At the same time, UNRWA is the largest employer of these refugees.⁵⁸ This fosters an ideological cycle that begins with the antisemitic content of UNRWA textbooks in school and continues in a subsequent employment relationship that perpetuates these antisemitic narratives. This cycle is supported and nourished by the suggestion that Israel alone is to blame for the refugee problem,⁵⁹ or that their flight and expulsion during the War of Independence constitutes Israel's "original sin".⁶⁰

UNRWA refugee status remains in effect even if the person acquires citizenship. Jordan is currently the only Arab country that allows Palestinian refugees to become citizens. However, this also means that around two million Jordanians are registered as UNRWA refugees, despite having no direct connection to Palestine, yet still receive assistance.

Collateral in the right of return

UNRWA refugee status is the ideological linchpin of the collective and identity-forming narrative of the Palestinian right of return.

The successful establishment of the concept of a Palestinian people – as achieved by the *Palestine Liberation Organization* (PLO) under Yasser Arafat in the 1970s,⁶¹ paired with the Palestinian (rather than pan-Arab) nationalism that this made possible – is also rooted in UNRWA refugee status. The roughly six million registered refugees are used as leverage and political pressure in the delegitimization of Israel's right to exist, primarily through the argument of the right of return. At the same time, the refugee status largely obstructs integration into Arab host countries. This raises the question of whether such integration is even desired. One thing is clear: the return of Palestinian refugees – even under conditions of successful integration into the Israeli state – would mean the end of the Jewish state. Jewish people would cease to hold a majority, in what is today the only country in the world with a Jewish majority.

The UNRWA has been feeding antisemitic narratives for decades, consolidating anti-Israel positions and ultimately undermining prospects for peace in the Middle East. Germany, for its part, has contributed to this.

In January 2024, the United States and Germany, along with other countries, briefly suspended payments to the UNRWA.⁶² This came as a belated reaction to the overwhelming evidence of the involvement of several UNRWA employees on October 7. However, after an internal UN commission dismissed the allegations,⁶³ German payments were resumed, albeit at a reduced level.⁶⁴ The President of the *Central Council of Jews in Germany*, Josef Schuster, described this decision as “incomprehensible,”⁶⁵ as the so-called Colonna Report had been heavily criticized.⁶⁶ It is also worth noting that the resumption of payments occurred before additional internal investigations into 19 UNRWA staff members (concluded in August 2024) had been finalized –⁶⁷ investigations that ultimately led to the dismissal of several employees. The United States, in contrast, continues to withhold funding.

Incidentally, the UNRWA also works *against* Resolution 194 of its parent organization, the UN. A return of those who “want to live in peace with their neighbors”⁶⁸ is obstructed through UNRWA's appalling involvement in the violence of October 7 as well as its systemic failures in general.

The failure of the feminist movement after October 7: UN Women and demonstrations in Germany

The first reports of sexualized violence by *Hamas* reached the general public as early as October 7, 2023. Almost synchronously with the attacks, the Islamist terrorist group broadcast disturbing, brutal footage of its atrocities on social media. A short time later, surviving women confirmed⁶⁹ what many around the world already suspected: numerous victims had suffered (mass) rape, abuse and sexualized violence. Murdered and raped women were mutilated, and their tormented bodies held up to the camera as war trophies. First responders corroborated the testimonies of the survivors. *Hamas*, on the other hand, denied the sexualized violence because it was against Islamic law, which forbids extra-marital sex.⁷⁰

The shocking images and videos as well as the testimonies of the witnesses did not trigger a wave of international solidarity with the victims. On the contrary: downplaying and even silence replaced the empathy that

would have been necessary. The lack of support from feminist groups for Jewish victims has since created a vacuum that seems to dismantle the feminist principle of “believe the victims”. Not only is sexualized violence trivialized or marginalized, in some cases it is even denied.

This can also be seen in Germany. At the 2024 International Women’s Day demonstration in Leipzig organized by the *8. March Alliance*, a speaker from the group *Sozialismus von unten* stylized the sexualized violence of *Hamas* as a calculated lie: “Colonial feminism [...] collectively portrays our men as brutal aggressors and sexual predators [...] Palestinian boys and men have been portrayed as bloodthirsty terrorists, rapists and savages in order to justify the genocide and collective punishment of us Palestinians [...].”⁷¹

Anti-Israel content was also reproduced at the Leipzig *March 8 Alliance* Women’s Day demonstration in 2025,



Caption: Graffiti on the campus of the Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin.

where demonstrators chanted "Zionism is fascism!"⁷² The alliance event gave the radically anti-Zionist group *Handala* the opportunity to make a speech. The speech was no longer available online afterwards,⁷³ likely as the alliance is aware of the explosive nature of the issue. The Saxon Office for the Protection of the Constitution is monitoring *Handala*, stating in a public explanation that the group expresses solidarity with *Hamas*.⁷⁴

The erosion of feminist principles is also reflected in the handling of graffiti found on the campus of the *Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin*. Initially the graffiti read "Rape not resistance", but then a smiley face was placed over "not" and "is" was added, ultimately reading "Rape is resistance".⁷⁵ The idea that the October 7 massacre constituted "resistance" had already been taken up on October 12, 2023, by "feminist" group *Zora*. In an Instagram post, the Marxist-Leninist youth organization trivialized and justified the sexualized violence of *Hamas* as "legitimate resistance", arguing that the "liberation of an oppressed people" cannot take place without violence. The post also called for support for the terrorist group *Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine* (PFLP).⁷⁶

Screenshot, Instagram, 17 February 2025



The UN Women Chairwoman's X post was also shared on Instagram.

1947

November 29: UN partition plan for Palestine

The UN General Assembly adopts Resolution 181 (II), a partition plan for the former British Mandate of Palestine. The plan outlines a Jewish and a Palestinian state in the Middle East. Arab states reject the plan.

December 2: Aden Pogrom (Yemen)

The UN partition plan triggers numerous anti-Jewish protests in the Middle East. In Aden, the violence escalates into a pogrom lasting several days.

1948

May 14: Founding of the State of Israel

December 9: Adoption of the Genocide Convention

The UN General Assembly passes Resolution 260 A (III), the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It comes into force in 1951.



Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rap... @Franc... · Mar 8, 2024
 My thoughts today are with the women & young girls of Gaza. May they find the "second of safety" they desperately need.
 My thoughts also go to the Israeli women, especially the soldiers: what have you done, what have you become. Dears, when you realise it, you will be haunted forever

Francesca Albanese on Women's Day 2024.

The failure of a universal feminism that also stands in solidarity with Jewish women is further reflected at the level of the United Nations. Two main bodies are tasked with promoting women's rights, protection and equality: firstly, the *United Nations Commission on the Status of Women* (UNCSW), which has been chaired by Saudi Arabia since March 2024, and the more prominent organization UN Women, which is also directed by the UNCSW.

UN Women formulates four strategic priorities for its work on its website. One priority is: "All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence".⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the organization's first public response to the events of October 7 came only on October 14, via an Instagram post. In a half-sentence, the attacks on Israeli civilians were mentioned – yet *Hamas*, the female hostages and the brutal sexualized violence are not.⁷⁸

The chairwoman of UN Women, Sima Bahous, was at least quicker. On October 8, 2023, she posted the following on X: "The escalation of hostilities in #Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is deeply concerning. All civilians, including women and girls, must be protected at all costs. We call for an immediate de-escalation and adherence to international humanitarian law."⁷⁹

This constituted a swift yet surprising reaction, as it trivialized the gruesome images and videos as well as the statements of the survivors and first responders. She did not mention *Hamas* as the perpetrator. While she condemned the violence against civilians, what about the abducted Israeli soldiers? The *UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories since 1967*, Francesca Albanese, went on to address this at International Women's Day in 2024. In a post on X, she derisively reminds Israeli women of their complicity: "My thoughts today are with the women and young girls in Gaza. [...] My thoughts are also with the Israeli women, especially the female soldiers: What have you done, what have you become? Dear ones, when you realize this, you will be haunted by it forever."⁸⁰

"Me too, unless you're a Jew" has since been the bitter conclusion of feminists who show solidarity with the women of October 7. Jewish activist Rosa Jellinek formulated the following perspective on this in an interview with *belltower.news* in autumn 2024: "What was

really needed was for people to stand by their values – not to deny or downplay the rapes, but to show genuine feminist solidarity, even if it doesn't fit your own narratives and assumptions. To challenge those, and to endure uncomfortable contradictions."⁸¹

The lack of engagement with October 7 prompted the *Central Welfare Office of Jews in Germany* (ZWST) to publish a paper in November 2023. It sharply criticized the inadequate response on the part of human rights organizations and explicitly the UN. The paper notes the "targeted gender-based violence against girls and women in the form of severe abuse, mass rapes, and the threat of human trafficking and forced prostitution during captivity".⁸² It seems commonplace that Jewish voices have had to fight to be taken seriously on October 7 – and still are barely heard.

An example from Berlin shows that this can be different. The feminist alliance *feminism unlimited* has been established there, calling for demonstrations critical of antisemitism in solidarity with Jewish women on Women's Day since 2024. Around 4,000 people responded to the call on 8 March 2025.⁸³ This year, too, a justified demand could be read on signs: "Believe Israeli Women".



Sign at the *feminism unlimited* Women's Day demonstration on 8 March 2025.

1949

May 11: Israel's admission to the UN

May 11: Israel's admission to the UN

The UN General Assembly admits Israel to the UN via Resolution 273 (III) with 37 votes in favor, 12 against and 9 abstentions.

May 15 – July 20: Israeli War of Independence

Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq attack Israel. Israel wins militarily, and a UN-mediated ceasefire agreement ends the war.

December 8: Foundation of UNRWA

The UN General Assembly establishes the *United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East* (UNRWA).

1967

June 5 – 10: Six-Day War

Egypt provokes an Israeli pre-emptive strike, followed by declarations of war from Jordan and Syria. The war ends with considerable land losses for the Arab warring parties.

November 22: Resolution 242

The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 242, declaring that the "fulfilment of Charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East." Peace requires the "withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict."

1973

October 6 – October 25: Yom Kippur War

Egypt and Syria attack Israel on the holiest Jewish holiday. In the course of the Egyptian-Israeli ceasefire, Israel is recognized by an Arab state for the first time.

“Anyone who condemns sexualized violence must do so consistently – regardless of political or ideological convictions”

Interview with Sharon Adler on the failure of the feminist movement after October 7

This interview was conducted on April 9, 2025 and translated into English.

To what extent have you encountered antisemitism in feminist circles since October 7?

Sharon Adler: Everywhere. Antisemitism, which manifests itself in the withdrawal of solidarity with the victims of sexualized violence on October 7, prevails everywhere. Whether in (queer) feminist circles and communities, art and culture, or organizations. There was and still is no sensitivity, no statements, no solidarity.

What role does the UN play in this?

Not only organizations such as *Terre des Femmes*, but also UN bodies such as *UN Women* have remained silent or hesitant; even *UNICEF* – despite the fact we now know that children were also passively exposed to sexualized violence. What I ultimately observed was a general lack of solidarity and empathy on the one hand and, on the other, a very clear withdrawal of solidarity with Jewish people. On a personal level, I was very disappointed by this, and it has reduced my safe spaces enormously. For me personally, the (non-Jewish) feminist scene has become irrelevant since October 7.



Mara Noomi Adler

Sharon Adler

Sharon Adler is a journalist and photographer. She has been the editor of the online magazine *Aviva* since 1999.

Is this attitude new in feminist circles, or have you observed it previously?

Unfortunately, it has a long history. As early as the 1970s and 1980s, Jewish women were excluded in lesbian and feminist circles. It was assumed that they could not be feminists because Judaism was patriarchal and therefore Jewish women could not be feminists per se. For example, members of the *Jewish Lesbian Shabbat Circle* often encountered prejudice within the feminist movement and were ostracized as a group. This attitude continued politically as well: In the 1970s, many left-wing groups expressed solidarity with the *Red Army Faction* and the *Palestinian Liberation Organization*, while Israel was portrayed as a colonialist state. Such narratives have persisted to this day and continue to shape the queer feminist scene – even after the terrible events of October 7. Today, for example, Jewish queer groups are excluded from Pride marches.

A particularly impactful and recent experience in 2024 was my speech at the award ceremony for the *Berlin Prize for Lesbian Visibility* at Rotes Rathaus. I wanted to use the opportunity to draw attention to the historical and current lack of solidarity with Jewish women – especially after October 7. However, I was advised in advance to delete critical passages as they might provoke “irritation”.

How did that turn out?

I said that I would either come and give the speech exactly as it was intended – or not come at all. Because I can't simply stand there and pretend everything is fine. I ended up attending the award ceremony and was able to give the speech in exactly as I had written.

You once said in a lecture: “The attack on Jewish women on October 7 was an attack on all Jewish women worldwide.

October 7 triggered the collective Jewish consciousness and thus the transgenerational trauma. At the same time, more and more safe spaces for Jewish people have been disappearing. When I see graffiti with “Intifada” or the red *Hamas* triangle in public places, it affects me directly as a Jew. Jewish women have had to live with the images of October 7 for a year and a half. We are confronted with the glorification of these acts on a daily basis, be it digitally or in everyday life.

The hashtag #metoounlessyouareajew appeared online after October 7.

The #metoounlessyouareajew campaign is based on the global solidarity movement #metoo. Human rights activist Danielle Ofek launched the campaign a few weeks after October 7 to draw attention to the silence of *UN Women* – specifically after their campaign for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2023. I was unable to find any solidarity with the victims of sexualized violence on 7 October in the *UN Women* campaign or in numerous other campaigns, press releases or statements surrounding this day of remembrance. I contacted *UN Women*, among others, and only received a cold reply that they had not yet gained sufficient expertise in this issue. For *UN Women* – who claim to be global champions of gender equality and awareness of human rights violations against women – and for the UN as a whole, Jewish people don’t seem to count.

I go to bed every night with the horrific images of October 7 and wake up with them too. The silence of these major organizations has deeply disappointed me. Because solidarity must not be a question of identity; anyone who condemns sexualized violence must do so consistently – regardless of political or ideological convictions.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has also done little on behalf of the Israeli hostages in Gaza.

The WHO has great international credibility and an enormous budget. But the WHO doesn’t seem to want to acknowledge that women and children were victims of violence on October 7 and also in *Hamas* captivity. There are no headlines, nor any sympathy for the Israeli side. For me, the organization has basically lost all legitimacy as a result of this. Because there really would have been ways to draw attention to the hostages’ dire state of health or provide personalized relief supplies, such as medicine or hygiene items. Rather, this reflects an attitude exposing the level at which hatred against Jews takes place and is protected.

1974

October 14: UN invites PLO

The UN General Assembly decides to invite the *Palestine Liberation Organization* (PLO) to attend the plenary discussion of the Assembly.

November 13: PLO speaks at UN

Yasser Arafat, leader of the PLO, gives a speech in the UN General Assembly wearing a kufiya, an olive branch and gun holster – which has become known as 'The Olive Branch Speech of Arafat'.

November 22: UN resolutions 3236 and 3237

The UN General Assembly adopts Resolution 3236 on the Palestinian right to self-determination. The resolution also affirms the “inalienable right of the Palestinians to return”. Resolution 3237 grants the PLO observer status at the UN General Assembly as the official representative of the “Palestinian people”.

November 29: UN Resolution 3246

The UN General Assembly adopts Resolution 3246 on the “legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence [...] by all available means, including armed struggle”.

1975

November 10: UN Resolution 3379

The UN General Assembly adopts Resolution 3379, declaring that Zionism is a form of racism. In 1991, the General Assembly revokes the resolution.

1987

December 8: First Intifada

The Palestinian uprising ends in 1993 with the Oslo Peace Accords and the founding of the Palestinian Authority.

1988

November 15: Palestinian Declaration of Independence

The Palestinian National Council proclaims independence and declares the State of 'Palestine'. Today, 147 of the 193 UN member states recognize the State of 'Palestine'.

1993

January 12: Resolution E/CN.4/1993/24

The UN Human Rights Council adopts resolution E/CN.4/1993/24, a mandate for the *UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967*. The mandate is limited to six years and has the task of assessing the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories in annual reports.

Rhetoric of superlatives: the UN and the genocide accusation against Israel

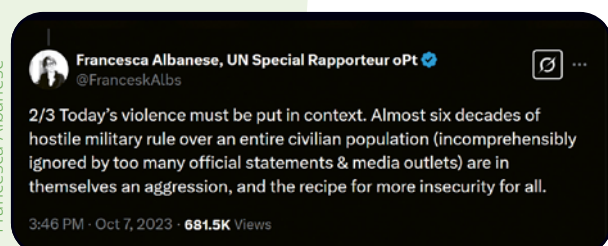
Berlin, February 18, 2025: On a cold afternoon, a crowd of people has gathered in front of the auditorium of the Marxist-Leninist daily newspaper *Junge Welt*. Flyers are handed out on the sidewalk with the message that Germany's money is going to "support genocide and occupation in Palestine". A curious passer-by asks who will be speaking in the auditorium. "Francesca Albanese", is the terse reply. The *UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Territories of Palestine since 1967*.

When Albanese takes the stage, most people have already pulled out their cell phones. The audience greets her like a pop star, stands up and cheers: "We love you, Francesca!" A level of popularity that is perhaps unmatched by any other UN official.⁸⁴

On this day, the left-wing party *DiEM25* as well as *Jewish Voice*, *Eye4Palestine* and *Gaza Committee Berlin* have invited people to a conference.⁸⁵ These are organizations known for their anti-Zionist positions and which have been involved in the anti-Israel mobilization since October 7. Albanese is the headliner and will give the keynote speech. "The reason I came here is to talk about genocide", Albanese introduces in English.⁸⁶ The audience knows what it will be about: Gaza, Israel.

Albanese emphasizes that she has come to Berlin as a UN representative. From the outset, she frames herself, and her subsequent statements, as a source of legitimacy. Among the audience are well-known anti-Israel activists, many of whom wear keffiyehs. Albanese is a central figure in the anti-Zionist scene.

X-Account of
Francesca Albanese



X-Post by Francesca Albanese on 7 October 2023

A common thread: "criticism of Israel"

Albanese is known for her forceful language. Back in 2014, she wrote in an open letter that the United States was being "subjugated by a Jewish lobby".⁸⁷ She later walked back on the statement, saying she had meant the "Israel lobby".⁸⁸ When she was asked about this conspiracy narrative in an interview with journalist Tilo Jung in May 2024, she evaded the question: There are so many conspiracy theories, she said. She was not familiar with that one.⁸⁹

Since October 7, her rhetoric has increasingly escalated. In posts, she used the hashtags "#GazaGhetto" and "#GazaGenocide",⁹⁰ compared Netanyahu to Hitler,⁹¹ and denied the antisemitic motivation behind the *Hamas* massacre.⁹² On the day of the *Hamas* massacre, she posted on X: "Today's violence must be seen in context."⁹³

These are not isolated incidents from the UN Special Rapporteur. Antisemitic and anti-Zionist narratives are a common thread running through her public appearances. When asked by a journalist in November 2024 whether she acknowledged Israel's right to exist, she replied curtly: "Yes, Israel exists."⁹⁴ Rights of existence, she added, apply to people, not to states. She visibly struggles to affirm Israel's right to exist and its sovereignty

At the same time, she downplays *Hamas*. When the General Court of the European Union removed *Hamas* from its terror list in 2014, Albanese wrote on social media that this was welcome news.⁹⁵ When Tilo Jung asked her about this statement in an interview, she said acknowledged that *Hamas* had committed crimes but stressed that it was not a terrorist organization.⁹⁶ After all, she argued, terrorism is not defined in international law. As early as 2022, she claimed that *Hamas* was merely resisting an occupying regime.⁹⁷

Albanese is not alone in her view. In February 2024, the then UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths also denied that *Hamas* is a terrorist organization,

Gaza holds international conference on Israeli blockade

Monday, 28 November 2022 5:42 PM [Last Update: Monday, 28 November 2022 5:42 PM]



Ashraf Shannon
Press TV, Gaza

Hamas's Council on International Relations has held an international conference on the impact of the Israeli blockade.

Iranian state broadcaster PressTV

Screenshot from Iranian state broadcaster PressTV of Albanese's appearance at the Hamas Conference in 2022

describing it instead as a “political movement”.⁹⁸ The UN does not list *Hamas* as a terrorist organization either.⁹⁹

Where UN representatives equivocate, the German federal government remains clear: In November 2023, the Interior Ministry imposed a ban on the *Hamas*. In a press release, it referred to the group as a “terrorist organization”.¹⁰⁰

Albanese not only glorifies *Hamas* but also seeks proximity with the group: In 2022, she spoke at a conference in Gaza organized by the *Hamas International Relations Council*.¹⁰¹ Participating virtually, she assured the audience: “You have the right to resist the occupation.”¹⁰² An occupying power, she asserted, necessitates violence and generates violence.¹⁰³

Who is Francesca Albanese?

Since May 2022, Francesca Albanese has served as the 8th *UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories since 1967*. The Italian jurist specializes in international law, human rights and the Middle East. Her career at the UN began in 2003 at the *Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights* (OHCHR) and UNRWA, where she worked until 2012. She has been teaching at universities in Europe and the Middle East since 2018.¹⁰⁴

Albanese repeatedly attracts attention through antisemitic and anti-Israel postings. In so doing, she plays a prominent role in antisemitic mobilization, including in Germany. The NGO *UN Watch* has been documenting and criticizing Albanese for some time, even calling for her dismissal.¹⁰⁵ After a controversial post on X comparing Hitler and Netanyahu on 25 July 2024, further calls emerged for her removal from office.¹⁰⁶

In November 1974, the UN General Assembly explicitly recognized “the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for liberation [...] by all available means, including armed struggle” in Resolution 3246.¹⁰⁷

United in the accusation of genocide

Geneva, March 26, 2024: Albanese presents her 27-page report “Anatomy of a Genocide”¹⁰⁸ at the UN Human Rights Council. The report concludes that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. Although Albanese condemns the actions of *Hamas* and calls for the release of the hostages, she makes it clear that October 7 must be placed in historical perspective.

She reconstructs the history of Israel as a history of forms and preliminary forms of genocide: “displacing and erasing the Indigenous Arab presence” before and during the founding of the state, “mass ethnic cleansing” in the years 1947-49, “settler-colonial project through military occupation” since 1967, and, today, “genocide” in Gaza.¹⁰⁹ In Albanese’s view, Israel’s actions are fundamentally driven by a genocidal logic. According to her, Israel is practicing “settler colonialism” in “Palestine” aimed at displacing or destroying an ethnic group. Here, genocide is simply the broadest form of “settler colonialism”.¹¹⁰ The UN Special Rapporteur uses the report against the Jewish state as a whole. In her narrative, Israel no longer has a right to exist.

The events since October 7 serve merely as a trigger to renew the accusation of genocide. This means that she does not consider the *Hamas* massacre and the capture of Israeli hostages to be the cause of the war. Her narrative is that Israel is waging this war due to its genocidal intent, rooted in its settler colonialism. The current genocide in the Gaza Strip, she states, represents an escalation of a colonial process of extermination.

Albanese draws on historical comparisons, including those to the Shoah. Her report borrows its title from a book by renowned Shoah researcher Omer Bartov. In his book “Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz” (2018), he reports on a small Ukrainian town under National Socialism. Her book „J'accuse“ (English: I accuse), published in Italian in 2023, invokes Émile Zola’s famous open letter. In 1898, Zola intervened in an antisemitism scandal and sided with Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus.¹¹¹

When Albanese presented her report to the UN Human Rights Council, Israel did not attend the session. On X, the Israeli delegation to the Council posted: “The report is an obscene inversion of reality, in which a so-called expert makes outrageous accusations – the more extreme, the better”.¹¹² Nevertheless, or perhaps

because of its provocative nature, the report has had an effect: Accusations of genocide against Israel are growing louder, with the UN playing a role in amplifying them through Albanese.

Albanese by no means speaks for any unified position within the *United Nations*. However, she is one of its loudest and most frequently heard voices. One case caused a particular stir at the end of 2024: Alice Wairimu Nderitu was the *UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide* from 2020 to 2024. In a statement on November 29, 2024, she declined to affirm that genocide was taking place in Gaza, explaining that her mandate did not allow her to make such a determination.¹¹³ This was a task of the courts, she stated. Thereafter, her contract was not renewed, with no reasons provided.

Few may know Nderitu’s name, but Albanese has achieved a certain degree of fame and popularity. Her theses on genocide also work so well because the highest court – the *International Court of Justice*, the UN’s principal judicial body – is now also addressing the genocide issue.

Israel before the International Court of Justice

The Hague, December 29, 2023: South Africa’s UN representative accuses Israel of genocide before the *International Court of Justice*. The charge alleges that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. In addition to the number of casualties, the representative argues, the cruelty of Israeli actions is equally shocking. Palestinians are being systematically killed, suffering severe physical and psychological harm. The living conditions imposed by Israel are described as a direct attempt to destroy the Palestinian population.¹¹⁴

The International Court of Justice accepted the case. However, it is expected to take years for the court to reach a verdict. South Africa’s complaint, which was formulated a few weeks after the *Hamas* massacre, was supported by 13 other states, including Belgium and Spain, while Germany has not joined in the chorus. The German federal government declared it “firmly and explicitly rejects” the “accusation of genocide against Israel”. In the words of a government spokesman, the accusation “completely unfounded”.¹¹⁵

A few months later, in March 2024, Nicaragua accused Germany of aiding and abetting genocide before the *International Court of Justice*.¹¹⁶ Nicaragua also filed an emergency motion demanding that Germany stop supplying arms to Israel. The International Court of Justice has rejected the claim.¹¹⁷

But what does “genocide” actually mean? According to the Genocide Convention of 1948, its definition does



Banner at the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin

not depend on the number of victims. Instead, the key factor is whether the intention was to destroy a population group, in whole or in part.¹¹⁸ Intent alone is sufficient and essential.¹¹⁹ In contemporary debates, however, the term is often used without regard for its legal foundation. In most cases, the accusation of genocide serves political purposes, rather than seeking to clarify genocide in itself.

Anti-Israel activism in Germany

The charge of genocide plays a central role in anti-Israel mobilization, not only internationally but also within Germany. It serves a rhetorical function: to

inflame emotion, define who is “good” and “evil”, and give people a sense of being on the “right side of history”.

In early 2025, a banner in the occupied lecture hall of the *Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin* read: “It’s not a fucking conflict. It’s a genocide in Palestine. Fuck Israhell, Germany, Zionism.”¹²⁰

On March 8, 2025, demonstrators at International Women’s Day carried a huge banner through Berlin-Kreuzberg that read: “One genocide does not justify another one.”¹²¹

The slogans are now part of the cultural code of the new anti-Israel movement.¹²² Variations of the genocide accusation such as “one Holocaust does not justify another one” frequently appear at demonstrations. In 2024, the Leipzig Authoritarianism Study showed that 22.7% of respondents agreed with the statement “Israel’s policy in Palestine is just as bad as the Nazi policy in the Second World War”.¹²³ This confirms that the accusation of genocide has fallen on fertile ground.

The Jewish state has long been demonized and blamed for crises and wars. Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian Authority, claimed at the German Federal Chancellery in 2022 that “Israel has committed 50 massacres in 50 Palestinian places since 1947 to the present day: 50 massacres, 50 holocausts.”¹²⁴ As early as 2008, he stated that Israel’s military actions in the Gaza Strip were more than a holocaust.¹²⁵

Similar forms of Holocaust relativization are appearing on German streets. On November 4, 2023, 17,000 people demonstrated against Israel in Düsseldorf. One large banner depicted a bomb labeled 2023 and a shower marked 1933, together with the question: “What’s the difference?”¹²⁶ – equating the current war with the Shoah.

On January 27, 2025, an assembly was held in Darmstadt under the title “Holocaust Memorial Day – Commemorating the Holocaust Means Fighting Fascism and Genocide”. One of the organizers was the group *Darmstadt4Palestine*, which had already distributed symbols of Hamas in the form of pendants in the past. The day of remembrance was instrumentalized to protest the alleged genocide in Gaza. Activists did not shy away from memorials: In the summer of 2024, members of the *Communist Organization* attempted to hold a memorial for the victims of the so-called genocide in Gaza at the Buchenwald Memorial in Thuringia, wearing keffiyehs.¹²⁷

The fact that the current war in Gaza was not initiated by Israel with genocidal intent, but was a reaction to



Hamas triangle and 'Staatsräson' (eng. raison d'état) sprayed on the wall of a left-wing housing project in Leipzig

the unimaginable violence of October 7, carried out by Palestinian Islamists, is irrelevant within this simplified worldview. "No business as usual during genocide" was written on a notice on the wall of the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin, along with "No class during genocide". At the Free University of Berlin, someone had written: "No more genocide-denying academia".¹²⁸

There is clearly more at stake: It is no longer just about the allegation of genocide, but also about accusing others of genocide denial. At the opening of the 2025 Berlinale, activists protested on the red carpet with a large banner reading "raison d'état is genocide".¹²⁹ In Leipzig, a red Hamas triangle and the word "Staats-räson" (raison d'état) was spray-painted in the rooms of a left-wing housing project.

Albanese's rhetoric contributes to the escalation of such accusations. "A genocide is taking place, and no matter how much it is denied, we must be conscious of what we must do",¹³⁰ she said in the auditorium of the Junge Welt. Anyone who does not share the

position is accused of denying genocide. "Genocide supporters" and "genocide deniers" are new enemy labels, directed particularly at Jewish people who do not adopt an anti-Zionist position. The German journalist Nicholas Potter has become the target of a smear campaign since the end of 2024 because of his work critical of antisemitism, and as a result, he has also received death threats.

A Holocaust memorial called "Block of Women" stands just a few hundred meters from the venue where the UN representative spoke. In the summer of 2024, the words "Jews are committing genocide" were spray-painted on the monument. These accusations of genocide are not intended to alleviate Palestinian suffering, but rather to inflame antisemitic resentment. Portraying Israel as the "ultimate evil" within a dichotomous ideological worldview is rooted in conspiratorial thinking – and UN representatives have also played their part in spreading it.

2000

September 28: Second Intifada

Following unsuccessful negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority under the mediation of the United States (Camp David II), more than 20,000 terrorist attacks occur in Israel. In 2005, the Palestinian uprising ends with a ceasefire.

2001

August 31 – September 7: World Conference against Racism (Durban I)

The conference, held in Durban (South Africa), is marked by antisemitism and anti-Zionism. It cements the UN's hostility toward Israel.

2006

January 25: Elections in the Palestinian Territories

Hamas wins the election against Fatah. Nevertheless, the Islamist terrorist organization takes sole control of the Gaza Strip by force in July 2007. Fatah continues to govern only in the West Bank. No further elections follow.

2011

September 23: Palestinian Territories become a full member of UNESCO

Mahmoud Abbas' application to admit the Palestinian territories to the UN is rejected by the UN Security Council. However, UNESCO admits them as a full member. In response, Israel and the United States suspect their funding to UNESCO.

2012

November 29: Palestinian territories granted observer status

On the 65th anniversary of the UN Partition Plan, the UN General Assembly grants the Palestinian territories observer status.

2024

September 10: Palestinian territories in UN General Assembly

For the first time, a Palestinian representative participates in a UN General Assembly session. The participation is symbolic, as the Palestinian territories do not have regular voting rights.

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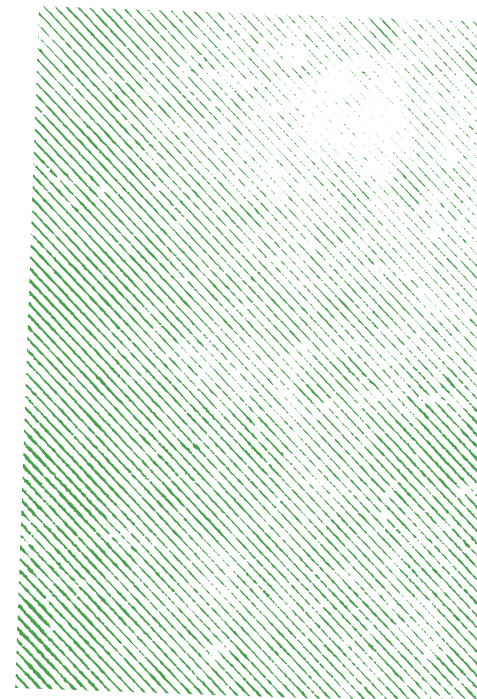
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"PROTECT AND SUPPORT ALL PEOPLE UNCONDITIONALLY!"

Anetta Kahane, founder of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation

Together against antisemitism

Our goal

Our goal is a world without hatred, incitement and exclusion – a world in which all people can live safely and with equality. Since its founding, the Amadeu Antonio Foundation has been committed to democracy, standing against antisemitism, right-wing extremism, racism and other forms of discrimination and violence. Because hatred and agitation must be met with resistance. While the equality of all is enshrined in the German Constitution, its actual implementation must be reinforced time and again. For this reason, the Amadeu Antonio Foundation pursues this goal through a variety of methods on many levels.

The Amadeu Antonio Foundation

...

SUPPORTS those affected by antisemitic, racist and right-wing violence, such as through the CURA Victims' Fund. The Amadeu Antonio Foundation is also committed to ensuring that the perspectives of those affected remain at the top of the agendas – be it on the streets or in the Bundestag.

FUNDS projects across Germany that strengthen our democratic civil society, especially in rural areas.

RESEARCHES and **MONITORS** topics including antisemitism, right-wing extremism and racism. This expertise informs studies, publications and advisory services, and also turns into concrete demands on politicians.

ENSURES that these issues remain in the public eye: via media outreach, social media campaigns and articles on Belltower.News – the Amadeu Antonio Foundation's journalistic platform. It also conducts educational work and (continuous) training programs for multipliers.

Your contribution

To carry out this work, we rely on donations. This individual support is an essential part of our funding. Each and every contribution secures the future and independence of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation – enabling us to continue our efforts against antisemitism, right-wing extremism and racism, together. We welcome you to be a part of this.

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The Education and Action Weeks against Antisemitism are a project organized by the Amadeu Antonio Foundation. We are a member of the Federal Association of German Foundations, a recognized provider of civic education, and a signatory of the voluntary commitment of the Transparent Civil Society Initiative.



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