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## US Imposes Sanctions on UN Human Rights Rapporteur Francesca Albanese

July 13, 2025

– Categories: Human Rights



The U.S. State Department has announced sanctions against Francesca Paola Albanese, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Special Rapporteur for the Palestinian territories. This move comes after Albanese released a report accusing Israel of committing genocide against Palestinians and expressing support for accountability measures, including the ICC's arrest warrants for senior Israeli officials. This move comes after Albanese released a highly contentious report accusing Israel of committing genocide against Palestinians and endorsing arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against senior Israeli officials.

Albanese’s report has been met with strong condemnation from U.S. officials, but it does not explicitly call for punitive measures against Israel. It recommends international legal accountability for alleged crimes under international law. Secretary of State Marco Rubio declared that these sanctions are a response to what he described as Albanese’s “illegitimate and shameful” efforts to use international legal mechanisms to target both the United States and its ally, Israel. Rubio criticized Albanese’s actions as a politically motivated campaign intended to undermine the sovereignty and security of the two nations.

The sanctions mark a firm stance by the U.S. government against what it views as biased conduct by a UN official whose role is supposed to be impartial. Rubio emphasized that the United States will not tolerate attempts to wage “lawfare,” the misuse of legal systems for political gain against its partners. He reiterated America’s commitment to defending its interests and those of Israel, including through any measures deemed necessary.

This decision also underscores ongoing U.S. skepticism toward certain United Nations bodies and personnel perceived to harbor anti-Israel bias. Albanese publicly supported accountability for alleged war crimes but did not explicitly “endorse” ICC arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant. Her statements focused on the need for justice but stopped short of endorsing specific ICC actions.

In a broader context, this move by the U.S. contrasts sharply with the current international debates around accountability and justice in conflict zones, reflecting Washington’s support for Israel’s right to self-defense and its skepticism of ICC involvement in Israeli military affairs.

By imposing sanctions on Albanese, the U.S. sends a clear message that it will push back against international efforts perceived as one-sided and politically driven, especially those that threaten its closest allies. This episode highlights the ongoing tensions between American foreign policy priorities and the United Nations’ approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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