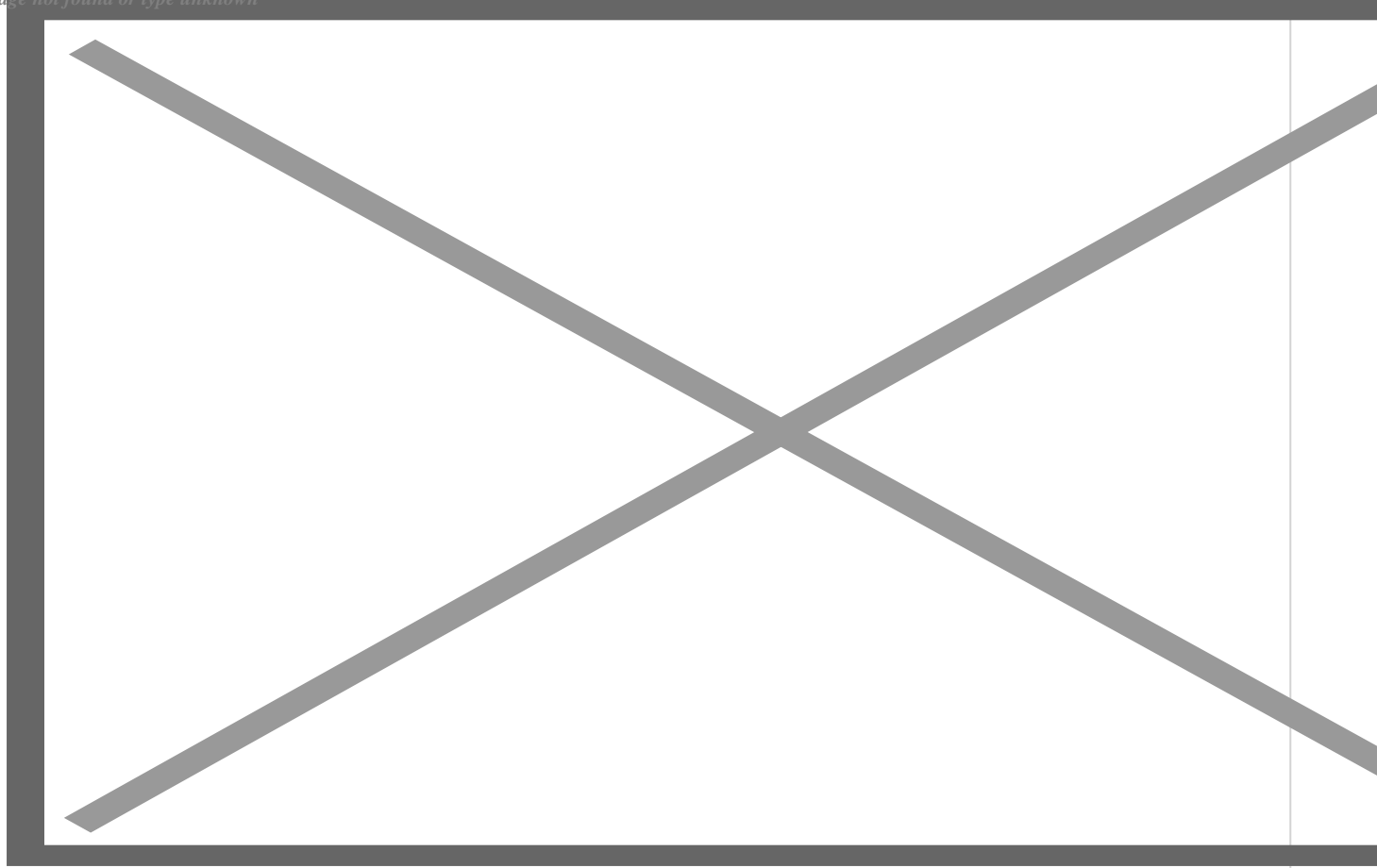


U.S. rejects accusation of Israeli apartheid against Palestinians

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An international rights group's report says Israel enforces a system of oppression and domination against Palestinians.

Washington, February 2 (RHC)-- The United States has reaffirmed its total support for Israel after an international rights group accused the Tel Aviv regime of imposing "apartheid" on Palestinians.

"The department's own reports have never used such terminology," U.S. State Department spokesperson Ned Price told a press conference, noting that the Department "reject[s] the view that Israel's actions constitute apartheid."

The remarks came after the rights body found the Israeli regime culpable of exercising “apartheid” across the occupied Palestinian territories. The group has become the latest human rights organization to accuse Israel of apartheid for its treatment of Palestinians.

The rights group nearly 300-page report, released Tuesday, details "inhuman or inhumane acts of forcible transfer, administrative detention, torture, unlawful killings and serious injuries, and the denial of basic rights and freedoms or persecution committed against the Palestinian population," creating "an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination over Palestinians."

“Palestinians are treated as an inferior racial group and are systematically deprived of their rights,” the group's report said. Israel's “cruel” policies of segregation, dispossession, and exclusion clearly amounted to apartheid, said the body.

The Israeli regime’s own officials have denounced the report as “anti-Semitic.” The regime claimed existence in 1948 after occupying huge swathes of Palestinian territories during a Western-backed war.

It occupied more land in another such war in 1967. Ever since, it has built hundreds of settlements upon the overrun territories and deployed the most aggressive restrictions on the movements of Palestinians there.

The regime withdrew from the Palestinian territory of the Gaza Strip in 2005, but took the coastal sliver under a crippling siege and launched regular military attacks only two years later.

Price alleged that the U.S. had its "own rigorous standards and processes for making determinations on potential human rights abuses." This is at the same time that Washington provides the regime with around \$3 billion in lethal aid every year. The United States also invariably uses its veto power at the United Nations to block the world body’s anti-Israeli resolutions.

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