

UN experts warn arms firms may be complicit in Israeli crimes

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People attend a protest calling for an end to arms trade with Israel, outside the Parliament building in Madrid, Spain. (Photo by Anadolu Agency)

United Nations, June 22 (RHC)-- United Nations experts say the companies that are providing Israel with weapons may be “complicit” in the regime’s human rights abuses and violations of international law.

In a statement released on Thursday, a group of 30 experts, including several UN Special Rapporteurs, called on the firms, which are arming Israel, to immediately halt their trade "even if they are executed under existing export licenses." "These companies, by sending weapons, parts, components, and ammunition to Israeli forces, risk being complicit in serious violations of international human rights and international humanitarian laws," they said.

They also highlighted recent rulings issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip and a request filed by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) seeking arrest warrants for Israeli officials on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

"In this context, continuing arms transfers to Israel may be seen as knowingly providing assistance for operations that contravene international human rights and international humanitarian laws and may result in profit from such assistance," the UN experts added. They further urged an end to the indirect supply of weapons to Israel through intermediary countries.

Israel's Gaza onslaught, the experts said, is characterized by "indiscriminate and disproportionate" attacks on the civilian population and infrastructure in the besieged Palestinian territory.

"The imperative for an arms embargo on Israel and for investors to take decisive action is more urgent than ever, particularly in light of states' obligations and companies' responsibilities under the Geneva Conventions, the Genocide Convention, the international human rights treaties, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights," they emphasized.

U.S. military support to Israel, including the supply of lethal arms worth billions of dollars, is aiding the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza and prolonging the disastrous war.

On Wednesday, the UN Human Rights Office published an assessment on six deadly strikes conducted by the Israeli military in Gaza between October and December 2023. It concluded that the Tel Aviv regime "may have systematically violated the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack."

Israel unleashed its brutal war on the Gaza Strip on October 7 after the Hamas resistance group carried out Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against Palestinians.

So far, Israel has killed at least 37,431 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 85,653 others in Gaza.

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