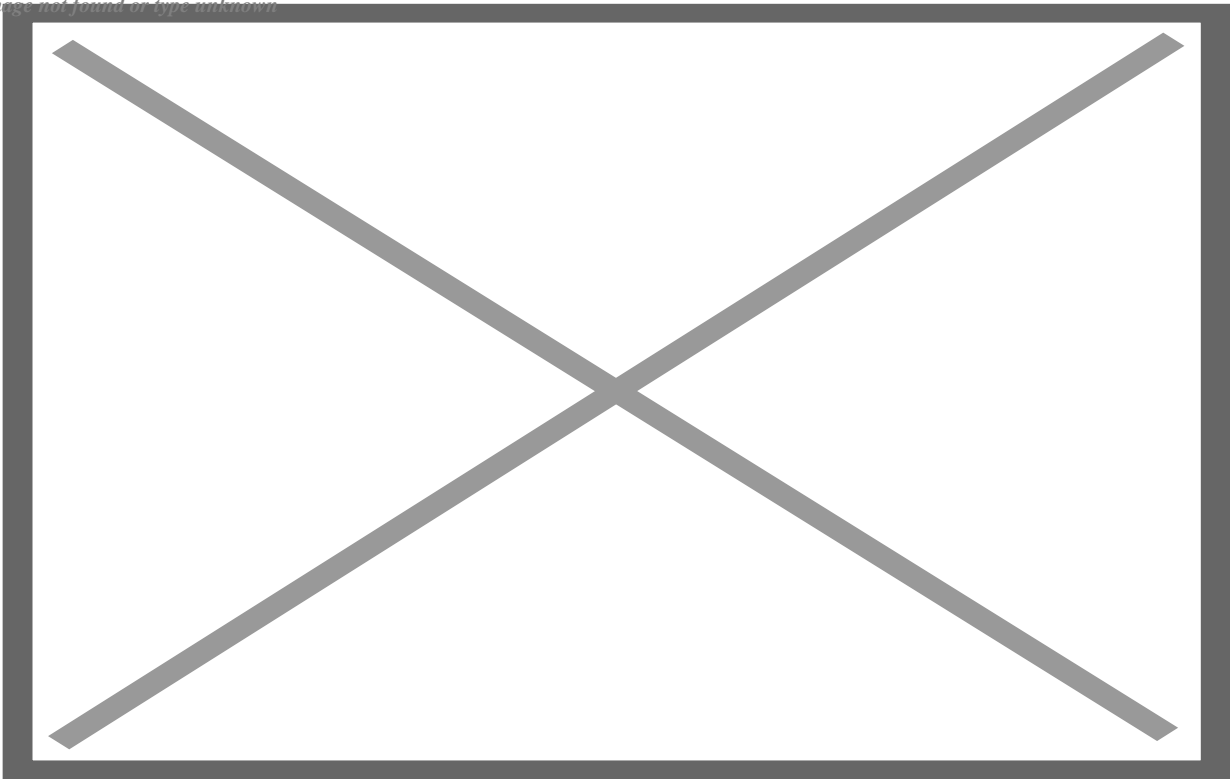


UN official urges ICC to issue arrest warrant for Israel's genocide mastermind

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Israeli regime's Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich

United Nations, July 2 (RHC)-- A top United Nations official has called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue an arrest warrant for the "mastermind" of Israel's genocidal policies, Bezalel Smotrich.

Smotrich is a senior figure in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far-right government, who served as a minister in the Israeli War Ministry and presently runs the Finance Ministry. He is a firm opponent to the establishment of a Palestinian state, calling for Palestinians to be "wiped out" of the occupied territories.

UN's Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian Territories, Francesca Albanese, said on Sunday that she does not understand why the ICC prosecutor has not yet

requested an arrest warrant for Smotrich. Albanese said Smotrich was “a key mastermind of Israel’s genocidal policies against the Palestinians.”

The UN official’s remark came in response to the Israeli cabinet’s approval of Smotrich’s plan to approve five settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank.

The Israeli regime has been accused of genocide by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). The ICJ in January ordered Israel to refrain from any acts that could fall under the 1949 Genocide Convention and to ensure its troops commit no genocidal acts against Palestinians. The ICJ has ordered the Tel Aviv regime to immediately stop its genocidal war on Gaza.

Meantime, Spain, Ireland, and Norway formally recognized the Palestinian state, joining over 140 UN member states that have recognized its statehood over the past four decades. Slovenia and Malta have also indicated they plan to formally recognize the state of Palestine.

Israel’s extremist finance minister said the regime’s Security Cabinet authorized one outpost for every country that unilaterally recognized Palestine as a state.

The five settlement outposts are Evyatar, Givat Assaf, Sde Efraim, Heletz, and Adorayim.

The Israeli Cabinet last Thursday, the 27th, approved measures proposed by Smotrich, which aim to “legalize” settlement outposts in the West Bank and impose sanctions on the Palestinian Authority (PA).

The move prompted Palestinians to call for an extraordinary meeting of the Arab League to discuss Israel’s ongoing genocidal war on Gaza and the regime’s settlement expansion in the West Bank.

International law regards both the West Bank and al-Quds as occupied territories and considers all Israeli settlement-building activity there to be illegal. Across Palestine, tensions have risen since Israel launched its genocidal war on the Gaza Strip in October 2023 which has killed some 37,900 Palestinian people.

ICC Prosecutor, Karim Khan, announced that he had asked the court to issue international arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and War Minister Yoav Gallant, on charges of “war crimes”, “crimes against humanity,” and “genocide” committed against the Palestinians trapped in the besieged Gaza Strip.

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