

United Nations agency says Israeli efforts to dismantle UNRWA must be resisted

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United Nations, July 29 (RHC)-- Antonia Marie De Meo, deputy commissioner of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), has told the UN Security Council that it must “push against” Israel’s attempts to dismantle the UN agency.

De Meo called for the council's assistance as Israel's parliament weighs new legislation that would designate UNRWA a "terror group" and officially cut all diplomatic ties between Israel and the UN body tasked with helping Palestinians.

De Meo said the legislation threatens UNRWA staff and the "entire UN system around the world." "We cannot afford this to become a new standard for future humanitarian operations in conflict zones across the world," she said, noting that 199 UNRWA staffers have been killed in Israel's war on Gaza, the vast majority were killed along with their families.

Some 190 UNRWA buildings have been hit by Israeli fire, and schools that were used as shelters by displaced people have been destroyed by air strikes, killing 560 people "sheltering under the UN flag", she added.

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