

# *Pope Francis urges probe into Israel's genocide in Gaza*

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**Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church, leads mass for the World Day of the Poor at St Peter's Basilica in The Vatican, on November 17, 2024. (Photo by AFP)**

The Vatican, November 18 (RHC)-- Pope Francis, head of the Catholic Church, has called for an investigation into Israel's ongoing onslaught on the Gaza Strip as experts say it amounts to genocide against Palestinians. He made the request in his forthcoming book, whose excerpts were published by

Italy's La Stampa daily on Sunday.

"According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of genocide," the pontiff wrote in his new book titled *Hope Never Disappoints: Pilgrims Towards a Better World*. "This should be studied carefully to determine whether (the situation) corresponds to the technical definition formulated by jurists and international organizations."

Reports say Pope Francis has privately used the word genocide to describe Israel's bloody aggression on Gaza. However, his recent comments are the first time he has publicly called for an inquiry to determine if the usurping regime's attacks meet the legal definition of genocide.

Last week, a UN special committee, set up in 1968 to monitor the Israeli occupation, said that Israeli policies and practices in the besieged Gaza Strip are "consistent with the characteristics of genocide." In its annual report, it said there were serious concerns that Israel was "using starvation as a weapon of war" in the besieged Palestinian territory.

Israeli officials have publicly supported policies to destroy "vital water, sanitation and food systems" in Gaza as well as prevent access to fuel, added the committee, composed of three UN member states, including Malaysia, Senegal and Sri Lanka.

Israel unleashed its genocidal war on Gaza on October 7, 2023, after the Hamas resistance group carried out its historic operation against the occupying entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

The Tel Aviv regime has so far killed at least 43,846 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 103,740 others, according to the Gaza Health Ministry.

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