

*Dutch court rejects bid to halt  
arms exports to Israel as  
genocidal aggression against  
Gaza rages on*

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Protest in Amsterdam in May 2024 ( File photo )

The Hague, December 13 (RHC)-- A Dutch court has rejected a bid by 10 pro-Palestinian NGOs to stop the Netherlands from exporting weapons to Israel and trading with illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory.

The Hague district court stressed on Friday that the state has some leeway in its policies and courts should not rush to step in.

"The interim relief court finds that there is no reason to impose a total ban on the export of military and dual-use goods on the state," it said in a statement. "All claims are dismissed."

The plaintiffs, citing high civilian casualties in Israel's assault in the besieged Gaza Strip, had argued that the Dutch state, as a signatory to the 1948 Genocide Convention, has a duty to take all reasonable measures at its disposal to prevent genocide.

"Israel is guilty of genocide and apartheid" and "is using Dutch weapons to wage war", said Wout Albers, a lawyer representing the NGOs, during the hearings.

The NGOs cited a January order to Israel by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to prevent acts of genocide in Gaza. The UN's top court said it was plausible Palestinians were being deprived of some rights protected under the Genocide Convention.

The coalition said it will review the court's ruling and is considering an appeal. Shawan Jabarin, the general director of Al-Haq, described the decision as an "abominable injustice."

"The Netherlands has abandoned the most basic rules of international law, to prevent colonisation, annexation, apartheid and genocide," he said.

The decision in The Hague came a day after an Israeli air strike hit a residential building in the Nuseirat refugee camp Gaza on Thursday, killing at least 40 Palestinians and wounding dozens more, according to medics.

Last month, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister, and Hamas's military chief, accusing them of crimes against humanity in connection with Israel's war on Gaza.

The warrants said there was a reason to believe that Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant had used "starvation as a method of warfare" by severely restricting humanitarian aid and had intentionally targeted civilians in Israel's assault in Gaza.

Earlier this week, the United Nations said humanitarian aid to north Gaza, where famine is looming, has largely been blocked for the past 66 days since Israeli forces launched a renewed ground offensive there, leaving between 65,000 and 75,000 Palestinians without access to food, water, electricity or healthcare.

Israel's offensive has killed at least 44,805 people in Gaza since October last year, a majority of them women and children, according to figures from Gaza's Health Ministry.

Earlier this month, Amnesty International accused Israel of "committing genocide" against Palestinians in Gaza since the start of the war last year. Israel has rejected the allegations.

[ SOURCE: teleSUR ]

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