

U.S. opposes Al Jazeera's push to take the Abu Akleh case to ICC

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An art exhibit honoring slain Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh (portraits in the foreground) at the spot where she was killed on May 11 while covering an Israeli army raid in Jenin in the occupied West Bank. (Photo by AFP)?

Washington, December 7 (RHC)-- The United States has voiced opposition to Al Jazeera's push to ensure accountability at the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the killing of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was shot by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank earlier this year.

Hours after the network submitted a request to the Hague-based court on Tuesday to investigate and prosecute those responsible for killing the Palestinian-American journalist, the U.S. State Department said it rejects the move. “We oppose it in this case,” State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters.

Washington has long stood against Palestinian-led efforts to take up Israeli abuses with international bodies, including at the United Nations and the ICC. “We maintain our longstanding objections to the ICC’s investigation into the Palestinian situation,” Price said on Tuesday when asked about Al Jazeera’s request to the court. “The ICC should focus on its core mission. And that core mission is of serving as a court of last resort in punishing and deterring atrocity crimes.”

Abu Akleh was fatally shot by Israeli forces during a raid in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin on May 11. Her killing spurred worldwide condemnation and demands for justice.

Israel, which rights groups accuse of imposing a system of apartheid on Palestinians, receives \$3.8 billion in U.S. military assistance annually.

Previously, the Biden administration had rejected calls for an independent investigation, insisting that Israel is able to investigate allegations of misconduct by its troops. Numerous U.S. legislators, including some staunch Israel supporters, had called on Washington to launch its own probe into the case.

Palestinian rights advocates stress that Israel cannot be left to investigate its own abuses, pointing to a long history of impunity for Israeli atrocities against Palestinians.

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