

UN expert says Israel intentionally killed aid workers to continue starvation of Gazans

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Geneva, April 3 (RHC)-- The UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories says the Israeli military has "intentionally killed" aid workers of the World Central Kitchen (WCK) in the Gaza Strip.

Francesca Albanese made the remarks on a social media post on Tuesday, after seven employees of the WCK food aid charity were killed in an Israeli airstrike in Dayr al-Balah earlier in the day.

The human rights expert went on to say that the Israeli military's deliberate attack on the aid convoy of WCK, which is responsible for distributing food aid among the Palestinian people in Gaza, was meant to scare donors of humanitarian relief and ensure the continued starvation of Palestinians in the besieged territory.

"Knowing how Israel operates, my assessment is that Israeli forces intentionally killed WCK aid workers so that donors would pull out and civilians in Gaza could continue to be starved quietly," Albanese wrote. "Israel knows Western countries and some Arab countries won't move a finger for the Palestinians," she regretted.

The special UN rapporteur further called for sanctions against Israel, while noting that on the day the Israeli regime bombed a foreign embassy in Syria, it also killed WCK aid workers. "Israel is crossing every possible red line with full impunity, still with full impunity. Sanctions now. Indictments now," she said.

On Tuesday, Gaza's Government Media Office said at least seven foreign aid workers of WCK had been killed in the central part of the Gaza Strip. It said the aid workers included citizens of Australia, Britain, and Poland.

Jose Andres, the chef who started WCK in 2010, said on X that he was heartbroken and grieving for the families and friends of those who had died in the airstrike. WCK CEO Erin Gore also said in a statement: "This is not only an attack against WCK, this is an attack on humanitarian organizations showing up in the most dire of situations where food is being used as a weapon of war. This is unforgivable."

The NGO further stated that its members were traveling in a "de-conflicted zone", adding that it had coordinated their movements with the Israeli military.

Reactions to the Israeli killing of aid workers are pouring in, with Australian Prime Minister Antony Albanese condemning the Israeli attack on the aid convoy of WCK, which left an Australian citizen dead among others.

Albanese made the remarks at a news conference at Parliament House in Canberra, saying he has conveyed his "anger and concern" to the Israeli prime minister in a phone call over the killing of Australian aid worker Zomi Frankcom.

"I expressed Australia's anger and concern at the death of Zomi Frankcom to Prime Minister Netanyahu in a phone call this morning." "These people are heroes," Albanese said, describing Frankcom and the other aid workers killed.

The Australian premier further stated that he was joining the United States, the United Kingdom and the United Nations in "a consistent demand for "full transparency and accountability" over the attack. "We await that to occur," he said, as well as for aid to reach Gaza unimpeded and in large quantities.

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