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# The UN's loathing of Israel is out of control

Alice Nderitu, a special adviser on genocide, was sacked for refusing to lie about the war in Gaza.



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The United Nations – unlike the US, the EU, the UK and other Western states – does not consider Hamas to be a terrorist organisation. This was true before the Hamas invasion and massacre on 7 October 2023. And it has remained true in the months that have followed.

In February 2024, Martin Griffiths, a British diplomat then serving as UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs, [explained the UN's position](#) in the starkest of terms: 'Hamas is not a terrorist group for us', he told Sky News, 'it is a political movement'. He gave that interview just four months after Hamas had slaughtered, raped, kidnapped and literally terrorised Jewish men and women in southern Israel.

The recent sacking of a senior UN official provides further evidence of the organisation's warped perspective. Alice Nderitu is a longtime human-rights advocate involved in conflict resolution in many different parts of the world. In November 2020, she arrived at the UN headquarters in New York, from her native Kenya, to take up her new role as the UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide.

Her four-year career at the UN can be divided into two distinct periods – before and after Hamas’s invasion of Israel.

Before, Nderitu travelled widely, assessing evidence of genocide and genocide denial in places like Darfur, Sudan. She held press conferences, wrote op-eds and issued dozens of public statements and even wrote [a helpful briefing document](#) called ‘When to Refer to a Situation as “Genocide”’. There she explained that a determination of genocide must be carried out by ‘a competent international or national court of law with the jurisdiction to try such cases after an investigation meeting appropriate due process standards’. None of this was particularly noteworthy or controversial. She was simply outlining the strict conditions and legal processes involved in establishing whether something is or isn’t a genocide in the eyes of the UN.

But then Hamas invaded Israel and everything changed. Her world began to unravel. By early 2024, she was under intense pressure from both within and without the UN. In an exclusive interview this month with [Air Mail’s Johanna Berkman](#), Nderitu said that she was ‘hounded, day in, day out... with protection from nobody’. ‘It’s instructive that this never happened for any other war’, she said. ‘Not for Ukraine, not for Sudan, not for DRC, not for Myanmar... The focus was always Israel.’

Over the past 14 months, the UN has certainly demonstrated its bias against the Jewish State. Within a few weeks of the Israeli bombing campaign in Gaza, over 40 UN human-rights advisers, including nearly all UN special rapporteurs, asserted that what Israel was doing was ‘a genocide in the making’. In March 2024, Francesca Albanese, special rapporteur for Palestine and a notorious anti-Israeli critic, published a report entitled, ‘[Anatomy of a Genocide](#)’. She stated that ‘there are reasonable grounds to believe that the threshold indicating Israel’s commission of genocide is met’. Later, in a [UN press release](#) published in October last year, Albanese called for the suspension of Israel from the UN, stating: ‘It is important to call a genocide a genocide.’

The UN’s principal judicial organ, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also joined the fray. In an interim ruling on 26 January 2024, it told Israel ‘to take all measures within its power’ to avoid the possibility of a genocide in Gaza.

Nderitu stood firm, however. In response to the ICJ ruling, she stated that ‘neither the secretary-general nor [myself] take a position in relation to ongoing judicial proceedings before the court’.

Internally, Nderitu was coming under fire from UN staffers for refusing to go along with the anti-Israel consensus. Externally, pressure was also mounting on her to conform to the genocide-in-Gaza narrative.

Indeed, in February last year, a group of leading Palestinian human-rights organisations wrote to UN secretary-general António Guterres complaining that, among other things, Nderitu was derelict in her duty. They accused her of failing to highlight the possibility of a genocide in Gaza and of criticising Hamas while not criticising Israel. They even claimed, as the *Guardian* reported at the time, that Nderitu ‘omitted any criticism of Israel’ in a statement she released on 15 October 2023, which unreservedly condemned Hamas’s attack.

This is technically true, but the reason her statement, published just one week after the 7 October atrocities, ‘omitted any criticism of Israel’ was simply because there was precious little to criticise. Israel didn’t even start its full-scale invasion of Gaza until 27 October, almost three weeks after the Hamas invasion.

The Palestinian group's letter to secretary-general Guterres also raised concerns about Nderitu's ability to act with 'effectiveness and impartiality'. This lack of impartiality was supposedly exemplified by the absence of any reference to the G-word in relation to Israel's military actions in Gaza.

The internal and external pressure on Nderitu eventually became too much. Last November, following her steadfast refusal to describe what Israel was doing in its war in Gaza as a genocide, she was sacked by secretary-general Guterres. The *Wall Street Journal* called her 'refusal to endorse a lie in service of a political agenda' a 'profile in courage'.

In the weeks and months after her dismissal, Nderitu kept her counsel. That was until earlier this month. Following her attendance at the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, she broke her silence in an interview with *Air Mail*. Speaking of her truncated tenure as the UN special adviser on the prevention of genocide, she was clear about the root cause: ‘The key thing is that I never called [Israel’s war in Gaza] genocide.’

Shocking as it is, Nderitu’s ordeal is yet another stark reminder of the extent to which Israel has become an institutional obsession of the UN, for both staff and members. During the past decade, the UN General Assembly has adopted 140 resolutions that were highly critical of the Jewish state – that’s double the number of resolutions critical of all the other countries in the world put together.

There is little that is implicit or unconscious about the UN’s anti-Israel bias. It is endemic and all-consuming. This is an institution that is rotting from within.