

Rutgers Prof Noura Erakat: 'Zionism Is Based on Racial Elimination'



Noura Erakat

by Andrew E. Harrod

“There’s not enough at this moment to support the charge of genocide” brought against Israel, said George Washington University international affairs and political science professor [Michael N. Barnett](#) during a [January 18 webinar](#). His comment marked a fleeting rational moment to a discussion of the International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) charges against Israel otherwise marked by the panel’s Israel-hatred exemplified by [Noura Erakat](#), associate [professor](#) of Africana studies at Rutgers University. She is also a faculty affiliate of the [Islamist-dominated](#) Center for Security, Race and Rights at Rutgers.

Barnett joined Erakat – among the most vitriolic anti-Israel

academics in America – to address the Arab Center Washington DC’s webinar on “Gaza and the Crime of Genocide: Legal and Political Dimensions of Accountability.” The webinar followed South Africa’s December 29, 2023, [submission](#) of genocide charges against Israel at the [politicized](#) ICJ, based in The Hague, Netherlands.

“Reading the South Africa report, 85 pages of quite impressive detail, suggest that there is a very strong case for atrocity crimes and war crimes, which in many ways carry the same kind of heavy consequences as do genocide,” Barnett proclaimed. “But initially, I was of the view that the South Africa charge was a bit of political grandstanding,” he added. For advice, he could turn to [Germany](#) – with its history of genocide against the Jews – as Germany has intervened in the case and condemned South Africa’s politicization of genocide.

Erakat, on the other hand, labored to lend an aura of academic respectability to a fusillade of false anti-Israel claims. Since October 7, 2023, “three months of warfare” in Israel’s offensive to destroy Hamas in the Gaza Strip “has resulted in over 24,000 Palestinian deaths, 40 percent of whom we are told are children, or 10,000 children,” she said, reciting casualty figures from [Hamas-run agencies](#) without noting their [distortion](#) into anti-Israel propaganda. [Analysis](#) of Hamas’s claims reveal that Israel has maintained a two-to-one civilian/enemy combatant casualty ratio in Gaza, remarkably low for such [difficult urban terrain](#) and a [testament](#) to extraordinary Israeli efforts to protect civilians.

Erakat focused on the fate of Gaza hospitals, noting that “Israel began bombarding the last remaining hospital, [Nasser Hospital](#),” in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, Gaza’s “last functioning hospital.” Israel “has decimated now nearly 35 other hospitals” as Hamas “command-and-control centers, as launching pads and human shielding,” yet “at the very same time has failed to provide evidence,” she claimed. This false claim disregards numerous reports from the [Israelis](#), [American](#)

[intelligence](#), [journalists](#), and [physicians](#) who have worked under Hamas control in Gaza, as well as released [Israeli hostages](#) once held in such hospitals.

Ignoring the difficulties of conducting military operations in Gaza, she asserted that Israel justified “this high level of death and destruction” as the “result of an [urban warfare](#), dense areas, Hamas fighting, Hamas human shielding.” This “makes it seem that somehow the conditions” Israel faces “fighting Hamas in urban conditions is unprecedented,” she said, although military observers have noted the unique [challenges](#) facing even Israel’s experienced troops. Hamas has had over a decade to embed itself in an [extensive network](#) of tunnels underneath Gaza’s [urban infrastructure](#), where almost every [civilian structure](#) cynically [shields](#) military installations.

International law “mandates a state to cease and desist an operation should the civilian harm and casualties exceed the military advantage to be achieved,” Erakat concluded. She did not clarify what level of [proportionately](#) between civilian and military casualties would prohibit Israel from fulfilling its stated war aim of destroying Hamas, an existential threat to Israel. “We can see very well that the military advantage that Israel has achieved is minimal if non-existent,” she claimed, for “Hamas continues to fire rockets from the center of Gaza City, indicating that its capability has not been diminished.” Yet the Israeli government has [said](#) it has already destroyed two-thirds of Hamas’s fighting units, which would be a significant achievement in such a difficult campaign.

Erakat was disappointed that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was not impressed with the ICJ’s authority – its [jurisdiction](#) is not compulsory – as she. “Right in the aftermath of the ICJ hearing, we heard Prime Minister Netanyahu [say](#) that it does not matter what The Hague says, that Israel will proceed as it sees fit,” she complained. Thus, “it is up to any country to decide what it needs to do

in order to ensure its national interest,” she said, as if this were not a common maxim for any country fighting for its citizens’ survival.

Israeli Agricultural Minister Avi Dichter’s recent [reference](#) to a “Gaza Nakba” alarmed Erakat. This [Arabic word](#) for “catastrophe” has achieved [mythological status](#) for people of Palestinian descent like her. It refers to [some 600,000 Arabs](#) who lost their homes during Israel’s 1948 independence war in the territory that became Israel. In 1948, “Israel conducted military operations that targeted Palestinian civilians” under a “defensive operation in Plan Dalet – that plan including the destruction of villages,” she said, invoking propagandistic [myths](#) about [Plan Dalet](#). She thus reiterated the [common Palestinian falsehood](#) that Israel expelled most of the 1948 Arab refugees, when in reality most of them fled conflict, often with the [encouragement](#) of Arab leaders who wanted to clear free-fire zones.

Today Erakat fears that “Israel has articulated that it wants to achieve a Nakba, or the removal of Palestinians, in order to achieve its security and peace” as in 1948. “Other forms of colonization,” she said, “are based on racial discrimination, whereas Zionism is based on racial elimination.” Not only does this twist Dichter’s words, as he spoke merely of Gazans evacuating conflict zones, but it fails to mention that no countries in the [Arab world](#) or [beyond](#) want to receive Gazans, with their well-known [jihadist sympathies](#), as refugees.

Superficially, Erakat’s statements may sound sober and sophisticated. Unmasked, they reveal her unremitting hatred of Israel. Her promotion of South Africa’s genocide charges against Israel illustrates how the Jewish state, no matter how grievously attacked, will be portrayed as fascistic and evil while providing a platform from which to demonize Israel.

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