

Jewish Council of Australia says Israel is 'rogue state', demands end to military, political support

Wednesday 17 April 2024, by [HINMAN Pip](#) (Date first published: 3 April 2024).

Amid the escalating violence in Gaza, the Jewish Council of Australia (JCA) has again called on state and federal governments to cut all military ties and to apply sanctions to Israel, as it did after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Sarah Schwartz, human rights lawyer and JCA Executive, said on April 2 that images of Israel's destruction of Gaza's Al-Shifa Hospital, together with the killing of aid workers, including Lalzawmi "Zomi" Frankcom from Australia "ought to force governments like ours to take concrete action".

Schwartz said the world cannot ignore "such horrific cruelty".

"Australia must end its role in supplying weapons parts to Israel, and throw its weight behind a global arms embargo."

Dr Max Kaiser, historian and JCA Executive Officer, said it has become clearer for many that "Israel is a rogue state".

"We say this as part of a large and growing number of Jews — in Australia and around the world — who have been calling for a ceasefire for many months."

Opposition to Israel's genocide "is an expression of our Jewishness", Kaiser said.

It is also an "honouring of our ancestors who were themselves the victims of genocide and racist violence".

JCA said the dire situation in Gaza "in particular the spread of starvation due to Israel's blockade of aid", means the Labor government must "do everything in its power to stop Israel committing the crime of genocide".

The International Court of Justice's (ICJ) March 28 ruling, in the case brought by South Africa against Israel for violating the Genocide Convention, ordered additional provisional measures which all countries that are signatories to the convention must observe.

That ruling called for "all available forms of diplomatic pressure, including sanctions and travel bans on extremist settlers and those suspected of war crimes" to be used.

JCA said this also applies to Australia.

Frankcom, an Australian aid worker, was among several international and one Palestinian worker killed by [Israeli air strikes on three vehicles](#) on April 2.

The World Central Kitchen, their employer, said the vehicles were [clearly marked](#) and had been coordinating with the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF).

[Marc Owen Jones](#), author and associate professor, asked on X why after the survivors from the first truck attack went to a second vehicle it was also attacked. The survivors then went to a third vehicle that was also attacked.

“These multiple strikes were done on three different vehicles the IDF knew to belong to aid workers,” [he said on X](#). He questioned whether this meant that IDF protocol is to destroy all vehicles in a convoy if they see any survivors.

The IDF claims that a Hamas soldier was hiding among the aid workers. Jones said if that was the case, and it knew this, why did it not wait until the alleged Hamas soldier left the vehicle before firing on it?

“This implies the IDF protocol is to destroy all vehicles in a convoy if they see any survivors?”

Jones said the world now knows this is “how Israel operates”.

He said the Hamas “operative” is likely to be “a cover story to hide a deliberate targeted attack on @WCKitchen”.

JCA said the ICJ’s order on Israel is to “[t]ake all necessary and effective measures to ensure, without delay” the “unhindered provision at scale” of basic services and humanitarian aid — including food, water, electricity, fuel, shelter, clothing, hygiene and sanitation products, and medical supplies and care to the people of Gaza.

JCA emphasised that “this order has legal implications for Australia”.

It means Australia “must comply with its obligations under the Genocide Convention by taking all reasonable measures to ensure Israel allows aid into Gaza and to achieve an immediate ceasefire”.

Schwartz said the ICJ’s additional provisional orders “are a clear sign that the situation in Gaza has drastically deteriorated”.

“Israel will not listen to the international community until there are consequences for its actions”, he said.

Australia has the “necessary tools”, including sanctions and travel bans on suspected war criminals “which it has deployed against Russia.

“All that is missing”, he said, “is the political will”.

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