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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.5.2026)

The EU is a firm supporter of the multilateral rules-based international order with the UN at its core, including the UN human rights system and the independence of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) special procedures' mandate holders.

Special Rapporteurs and other special procedures mandate holders are independent human rights experts appointed by the HRC; they work on a voluntary basis and serve in their personal capacity and are independent from any government or organisation. This applies also to Francesca Albanese, the current UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967.

The EU has a principled position of supporting the independence of special procedures mandate holders, who must be able to carry out their work effectively in an independent and impartial manner. They play an essential role in fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for serious human rights violations. They bring alleged violations or abuses to the attention of states and other actors, conduct thematic studies, contribute to the development of international human rights standards, engage in advocacy, raise public awareness, and provide advice for technical cooperation.

The EU has repeatedly called for an end to attacks and threats against mandate holders appointed by the HRC¹.

The EU cooperates with HRC mechanisms and fully respects their mandates and urges all states to do so.

¹ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-geneva/hrc61-eu-statement-interactive-dialogue-special-rapporteur-situation-human-rights-defenders_en.