



[The Palestinian Authority Formally Asks the International Criminal Court to Investigate the Reprehensible Killing of Journalist Shireen Abu Akleh](#)

The Palestinian Authority has submitted a file to the International Criminal Court (ICC), formally asking the tribunal to launch an investigation into the heinous killing of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. The reputable Palestinian-American reporter was fatally shot by an Israeli sniper while on assignment in Jenin, with the killing sparking widespread outrage and condemnation. There has been an array of calls regarding the need for a credible probe. Recently, more than 50 U.S. lawmakers signed a letter requesting that the State Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) intervene and lead a probe due to the disturbing circumstances of the case and Abu Akleh's American citizenship. Prominent global figures have also weighed in. During this week's World Economic Forum in Davos, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani made remarks urging the international community to dedicate deserved attention to the longstanding injustices like this being perpetrated against Palestinians. Ultimately, rights and social justice activists have outlined the importance of accountability for such continued Israeli abuses in order to prevent them from committing these types of crimes with impunity.

The death of journalist Shireen Abu Akleh has elicited deep anger because of the blatant culpability of Israeli forces in her killing, as verified by video and first-hand accounts at the scene. Abu Akleh was covering an Israeli military raid near the Jenin refugee camp in the illegally-occupied West Bank when she was fatally shot in the head despite wearing a clearly marked press vest. Video evidence by esteemed human rights group B'Tselem immediately refuted the disgraceful and misleading initial Israeli claims that Abu Akleh was killed by Palestinian militant gunfire, and new footage that has emerged over the preceding week showed that no gunfighting was taking place in the area where she was shot prior to the incident. Furthermore, eyewitnesses stated that Abu Akleh had been targeted by an Israeli sniper, and that there was no crossfire that could have indicated she was accidentally shot and killed.

Due to the aforementioned elements of the case, Palestinians, social justice activists, and others are calling on the ICC to initiate a transparent and thorough investigation. This includes more than 100 celebrities and artists who have also signed a statement demanding accountability. In it, they remark that: "The killing of Shireen Abu Akleh is a grave breach of international humanitarian law and an attack on journalism and freedom of expression. UN and international human rights experts have said that it may constitute a war crime and should be subject to an independent, transparent international investigation. These crimes are part of a pattern of violence, harassment, and intimidation against Palestinian journalists who are shining a light on what Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Israel's leading human rights organization, B'Tselem, have described as a system of apartheid imposed on the Palestinian people." The signatories of the letter additionally pointed out that governments should implement the same type of punitive measures against Israel that have been placed on Russia in response to its illegal and destructive invasion of Ukraine.

Unsurprisingly and as expected, the Israeli army's military police criminal investigation division expressed that they did not plan on launching a probe into the killing. Thus, there is even more need for strong international pressure on the ICC to spur a fair investigation and ensure accountability for deplorable crimes like the killing of Abu Akleh.