



PRESS RELEASE – 4 March 2026, Paris

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## **Statements Falsely Attributed to Francesca Albanese: JURDI Refers the Matter to the Court of Justice of the Republic Following Remarks by Minister Jean-Noël Barrot**

By letter dated today, the Association of Jurists for the Respect of International Law (JURDI) formally notified Mr. Rémy HEITZ, Prosecutor General at the Court of Cassation, of conduct attributable to Mr. Jean-Noël BARROT, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, which may constitute the criminal offence of dissemination or reproduction of false information, as provided for under Article 27 of the Law of 29 July 1881 on Freedom of the Press.

The facts were committed to the detriment of Ms. Francesca ALBANESE, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. Mr. Jean-Noël BARROT relayed and endorsed falsified information alleging that she had described Israel as “a common enemy of humanity” — a statement she has, in fact, never made.

These false statements, which are all the more serious given their significant international dissemination, were made on 11 February 2026 before the National Assembly, in the exercise of Mr. BARROT’s ministerial functions. Pursuant to Article 68-1 of the Constitution, jurisdiction over offences committed by members of the Government in the performance of their official duties lies exclusively with the Court of Justice of the Republic (Cour de justice de la République), a special court empowered to try ministers for criminal acts committed in office.

In accordance with Article 17 of the Institutional Act (loi organique) of 23 November 1993 governing the Court of Justice of the Republic, JURDI requests that the Prosecutor General at the Court of Cassation seek the opinion of the Petitions Commission attached to that Court, with a view to initiating criminal proceedings against Mr. Jean-Noël BARROT.

The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs cannot invoke parliamentary immunity on the sole ground that his remarks were delivered within the National Assembly. The preparatory works leading to the adoption of Article 41 of the Law of 29 July 1881 on Freedom of the Press make it clear that the immunity provided for in the first paragraph of that provision applies exclusively to Members of Parliament (Deputies and Senators), and not to members of the Government.

This referral follows a prior notification submitted on 12 February 2026 to Ms. Laure BECCUAU, Public Prosecutor of Paris, concerning the edited video containing truncated statements by Ms. Francesca ALBANESE published by the organisation UN Watch, and its subsequent instrumentalisation by certain political figures, including Member of Parliament Ms. Caroline YADAN.

JURDI will continue to defend respect for international law, notwithstanding the efforts of certain political leaders who, rather than ensuring its implementation, choose instead to discredit those who seek to uphold it.

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