

Australian Community Leaders Call on Albanese to Isolate Apartheid Israel, Scrap Weapons Deals

By [Rachel Evans](#)

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*Community leaders, including Palestinian Ahmed Abadla from the Palestine Justice Movement, called on **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** to impose sanctions on Israel and stop the trade in weapons at a media conference at Port Botany on March 6.*

They said they also wanted to "send a clear message" to [ZIM shipping](#) that it is not welcome in any of Sydney's ports.

"It is time for Western societies and the entire world to act," Ahmed said, adding sanctions and boycotts would send a very clear message that Australia was taking its responsibility seriously in the wake of the interim ruling by the [International Criminal Tribunal](#).

Paul Keating, the Sydney branch secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) said: "Israel is an apartheid state; it is also a rouge state. We support the Palestinians' right to resist."

Keating issued a warning to all shipping corporations that they should not be doing business with Israel while it is committing genocide in Gaza. "If you don't want protests, declare that you will not move Israel's goods."

Noting the big police presence at the media conference, he said NSW Labor needed to "abolish the anti-protest laws".

NSW Greens **Senator Mehreen Faruqi** said it was not good enough for the Albanese government to be “aiding, abetting and arming Israel”, after 150 days genocide.



Mehreen Faruqi addressing the media conference, with Paul Keating to her right and Christy Cain to her left. Photo: Many King

She demanded that the \$4 million in frozen aid to UN Works and Relief Agency (UNWRA) “without any evidence of Israel’s claims” showed that the Labor government is “an accessory to the genocide”.

“Our outrage at the massacre should not be underestimated”, she said adding, “Australia must sanction Netanyahu and his war cabinet”.

Greens **Senator David Shoebridge** said the reason that Albanese and Wong had been referred to the International Criminal court is “because of their actions make them complicit in genocide”.

He referred to the MUA’s “proud history” of stopping pig iron exports to Japan during World War II, military equipment designed to prevent Indonesia’s struggle for independence and weapons shipments to Vietnam to aid the US war there against the North.



NSW Greens Senator David Shoebridge addresses the media conference. Photo: Mandy King

“Anthony Albanese has encouraged two-way weapons’ trade — bringing in billions of dollars of Israeli weapons that have been tested on Palestinians.

“It is permitting the trade in weapons and components to Israel — including drones, and parts for F35 fighter jets.”

Christy Cain, national Secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, spoke last and made an impassioned plea to the union movement to do more to stop Israel’s genocide.

“This is not a war, it is a massacre,” he said. “To say I’m disappointed with the union movement would be an understatement. Every leader of the trade union movement has to play a role for peace.”

Cain added to the list of proud union moments saying:

“We have previously been a part of stopping apartheid in South Africa. Nelson Mandela came to Australia after 27 years in jail, to thank the seaman’s union and the WWF [Waterside Workers Federation].”

He also noted the MUA and the CFMEU’s support for the East Timorese struggle for independence from Indonesia.

“I say to [ACTU secretary] Sally McManus and to Anthony Albanese: ‘Show leadership’! Peace is union business.

“Unions must get out there: we all have a role to play in stopping this massacre,” Cain said.

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Featured image: Ahmed Abadla from the Palestine Justice Movement addresses the media conference at Port Botany. Photo: Mandy King

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