

[Vatican](#)

[Vatican News](#)



Pope Francis presides over a ceremony on the occasion of All Souls Day, at the Laurentino cemetery in the outskirts of Rome, Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024. (AP/Andrew Medichini)

Giada Zampano

[View Author Profile](#)

Associated Press

[View Author Profile](#)

[**Join the Conversation**](#)

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. [Learn more](#)

Rome — November 18, 2024

[Share on Bluesky](#)[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)

[Pope Francis](#) has called for an investigation to determine if [Israel's attacks in Gaza constitute genocide](#), according to excerpts released Sunday from an upcoming new book ahead of the pontiff's jubilee year.

It's the first time that Francis has openly urged for an investigation of genocide allegations over Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip. In September, he said Israel's [attacks in Gaza and Lebanon have been "immoral" and disproportionate](#), and that its military has gone beyond the rules of war.

The book, by Hernán Reyes Alcaide and based on interviews with the Pope, is entitled "Hope never disappoints. Pilgrims towards a better world." It will be released on Tuesday ahead of the pope's 2025 jubilee. Francis' [yearlong jubilee is expected to bring more than 30 million pilgrims to Rome](#) to celebrate the Holy Year.

"According to some experts, what is happening in Gaza has the characteristics of a genocide," the pope said in excerpts published Sunday by the Italian daily La Stampa.

"We should investigate carefully to determine whether it fits into the technical definition formulated by jurists and international bodies," he added.

Last year, Francis met separately with relatives of Israeli hostages in Gaza and Palestinians living through the war and set off a firestorm by using words that Vatican diplomats usually avoid: "terrorism" and, according to the Palestinians, "genocide."

Advertisement

Francis spoke at the time about the suffering of both Israelis and Palestinians after his meetings, which were arranged before the Israeli-Hamas hostage deal and a temporary halt in fighting was announced.

The pontiff, who last week also [met with a delegation of Israeli hostages who were released and their families](#) pressing the campaign to bring the remaining captives home had editorial control over the upcoming book.

The war started when [the militant Hamas group attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023](#), killing 1,200 people and abducting 250 as hostages and [taking them back to Gaza, where dozens still remain](#).

Israel's subsequent yearlong military campaign has killed more than 43,000 people, according to Gaza health officials, whose count doesn't distinguish between civilians and fighters, though they say more than half of the dead are women and children.

The Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza has triggered [several legal cases at international courts in The Hague](#) involving requests for arrest warrants as well as accusations and denials of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

In the new book, Francis also speaks about migration and the problem of integrating migrants in their host countries.

"Faced with this challenge, no country can be left alone and no one can think of addressing the issue in isolation through more restrictive and repressive laws, sometimes approved under the pressure of fear or in search of electoral advantages," Francis said.

"On the contrary, just as we see that there is a globalization of indifference, we must respond with the globalization of charity and cooperation," he added. Francis also mentioned the "still [open wound of the war in Ukraine](#) has led thousands of people to abandon their homes, especially during the first months of the conflict."