

Israeli Justice: Rachel Corrie Death Ruled An Accident

By [Common Dreams](#)

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(Above) Rachel Corrie to Gaza to Break the Israeli Blockade

A district court in Haifa has rejected a civil lawsuit that the state of Israel and its armed forces were at fault in the death of American human rights activist Rachel Corrie, who was crushed by an Israeli Defense Force bulldozer in 2003 while trying to prevent the destruction of Palestinian homes in the Gaza Strip.

"I reject the suit," Judge Oded Gershon said in the briefly worded verdict. "There is no justification to demand the state pay any damages."

The lawsuit accused the Israeli military of either unlawfully or intentionally killing Rachel or of gross negligence.

The suit was filed by Rachel's parents, Cindy and Craig Corrie, who requested only \$1 in damages and legal expenses.

Both were present for the reading of the verdict. "I am hurt," Corrie's mother said at a press conference after the verdict was announced.

"From the beginning it was clear to us that there was... a well-heeled system to protect the Israeli military, the soldiers who conduct actions in that military, to provide them with impunity at the cost of all the civilians who are impacted by what they do," she said.

She added: "I believe this is a bad day not only for our family, but a bad day for human rights, for humanity, for the rule of law and also for the country of Israel."

The family's lawyer, Hussein Abu Hussein, responded to the verdict by saying: "While not surprising, this verdict is yet another example of where impunity has prevailed over accountability and fairness. Rachel Corrie was killed while non-violently protesting home demolitions and injustice in Gaza, and today, this court has given its stamp of approval to flawed and illegal practices that failed to protect civilian life. In this regard, the verdict blames the victim based on distorted facts and it could have been written directly by the state attorneys."

Abu Hussein made assurance that the ruling would be appealed to Israel's supreme court.

Human rights advocates bemoaned the verdict, with some calling for an intensification of the international divestment campaign against Israel and private companies who profit from

the continued occupation of Palestinian lands and the destruction of Palestinian homes.

“At the time of her death, Rachel was trying to prevent the destruction of Palestinian homes by Caterpillar bulldozers,” said Riham Barghouti, a member of the We Divest National Coordinating Committee. “Israel’s illegal policy of destroying Palestinian homes in the occupied territories, sometimes extending to entire villages, remains as urgent an issue today as it was when Rachel was killed. In Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley and Hebron Hills, Palestinians continue to live with the daily threat of their homes and property being confiscated or demolished by Israeli authorities.”

Caterpillar, the US company that supplies the Israeli military with bulldozers like the one that killed Corrie, have long been a target of activists hoping to call attention to the interplay between private corporations and the ongoing military occupation of the West Bank and blockade Gaza.

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