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Although it is long overdue: Opening an investigation into Israel's crimes in Palestine serves justice

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](https://www.aohr.org.uk)) welcomed the decision of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to open an official investigation into the crimes committed in the Palestinian territories since June 13, 2014, in a step AOHR UK considered as long overdue, but serves justice and gives hope for redress for victims of these brutal crimes.

On Wednesday, March 3, the Prosecutor General, Fatou Bensouda, made an official [statement](#) on the beginning of an independent and objective investigation into crimes committed by the Israeli occupation army during the war on Gaza in 2014, after the court found “a reasonable basis” exists to commence an investigation.

This long-awaited decision comes after the court’s judges [affirmed](#) that the court’s jurisdiction includes Palestine as a member, last month.

This step was believed to be a prelude to the investigation of possible war crimes committed by Israeli leaders and officials against the defenseless Palestinian people.

After an initial [investigation](#) that lasted for five years following the request made by Palestine during the Gaza war, Bensouda announced in December 2019, her intention to open a full investigation into crimes



committed in Palestine. AOHR UK considered it as a long delay that amount to denying justice.

AOHR UK called on the ICC to take the [necessary measures](#) to ensure the independence and impartiality of the investigations, and to protect the investigations from any obstacles that it may face by the [countries](#) solicited by Israel to defend them and oppose any decision issued in the interest of the Palestinians.

AOHR UK hoped that the investigations would not be as slow as the steps taken to reach this decision.

AOHR UK has warned against the court's yielding to any political pressure from any party. Israel has strongly condemned the decision, as it did a recent ruling that the ICC has jurisdiction over Palestine, as joined by the US, [Germany](#), [Austria](#), [Australia](#) and [Canada](#).

The Trump administration had previously imposed [sanctions](#) on staff at the International Criminal Court for their involvement in investigations against US soldiers and officers who committed crimes in Afghanistan in June 2020. These sanctions came after numerous threats were made by Trump over the court's activities in Afghanistan and Palestine, where he threatened to impose sanctions on the court's employees, refusing to prosecute any American or Israeli for any crime they have committed.

The importance of conducting such an investigation is to affirm that criminals and perpetrators of these grave violations cannot escape punishment, and those who seek justice will always work hard to achieve it and provide redress for the Palestinian victims who suffered the most heinous violations and crimes and whose rights have been squandered over the years.



The Palestinians' suffering from [crimes](#) committed by the occupation forces did not only start in June 2014, but it goes back to 1948 and 1967, when all lands that were subject to the British mandate fell under the Israeli occupation, during which serious crimes described in international humanitarian law as war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed.

AOHR UK stressed that the delay in achieving justice, along with the lack of real steps taken against Israel to deter it, contributed largely to encouraging it to commit more crimes and violations against the defenseless Palestinians.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)