# Maliki: ICC Prosecutor to Visit with PA Officials

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By Yonah Jeremy Bob, Maayan Groisman

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http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Palestinian-FM-ICC-to-meet-with-PA-officials-though-Prosecutor-says-nothing-set-446564

Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riyad Maliki announced Tuesday that a group from the International Criminal Court Prosecutor’s Office is expected to visit the area soon to meet with senior Palestinian officials.

In an interview to The Voice of Palestine radio station, Maliki claimed that Israel has refused to collaborate with the ICC Prosecutor’s Office and to allow its members access to its territory. Therefore, he said that the PA has coordinated the ICC meeting with a neighboring state.

In response, the ICC Prosecutor’s Office said it “is still planning a visit to the region as part of the normal course of its preliminary examination activities, and as the Prosecutor has confirmed, continues to constructively engage with both sides in the process. No details have been confirmed yet.”

The office and senior Israeli officials have in the past confirmed to The Jerusalem Post that there is now regular communication between it and Israeli officials on a range of jurisdictional issues in the debate about whether it has a basis to intervene in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Prosecutor’s Office is currently in the midst of a preliminary examination of jurisdictional issues which could eventually lead to a criminal investigation of whether Israelis or Palestinians committed war crimes during the 2014 Gaza war and regarding the settlement enterprise.

The office has also indicated that it is at the earliest stages of its review of the situation. At early stages, formal visits are not necessary, though the thorny issue of a visit is likely to arise at some point.

Israel might, at this stage, refuse the Prosecutor’s Office access to Israel and Gaza, so it can preserve its view that the ICC has no jurisdiction there.

The Foreign Ministry had not responded by press time.

Maliki refused to tell when the ICC Prosecutor’s group would arrive, in order to avoid travel problems for the Palestinian officials due to meet with them.

The PA joined the ICC’s Rome Statute in January 2015 over Israeli objections that it is not a state and cannot join international conventions. Israel itself never acceded to the statute.