Israeli group levels torture accusations against the Palestinian Authority, group submits claim to ICC

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An [Israeli-based](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/israel) legal network of lawyers and activists has filed a submission to the International Criminal Court alleging the systemic torture of Palestinians by the group that oversees part of the West Bank and its reported liability for the captivity of Israelis in the Gaza Strip.

The International Legal Forum is alleging the Palestinian National Authority and its leadership – President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh – routinely engage in [torturing Palestinians](https://video.foxnews.com/v/3928595/), including journalists, political opponents, dissidents, human rights activists, minors and members of the LGBTQ community.

The group is calling for the ICC to launch an investigation into the allegations and prosecute the PA leaders.

"Enough is enough. It is long past time that the Palestinian Authority was held accountable for their ongoing and systematic torture of the Palestinian people, as well as responsibility for the torture of four Israeli citizens, currently being held captive in Gaza," ILF CEO Arsen Ostrovsky said in a statement. "These are egregious and indisputable violations of international law, which the ICC ought to investigate and prosecute accordingly."

Such acts of torture have included violent beatings, arbitrary detention, solitary confinement, cruel and inhumane prison conditions, harassment, forced confessions and summary executions, the group said.

The submission to the court, based in the Hague, Netherlands, came a day before the United Nations Committee Against Torture is scheduled to convene in Geneva.

Other groups like UN Watch, a nonprofit that seeks to hold the United Nations accountable, said Palestinians who sell land to Jews are also tortured and killed. In a report released last week, it cited the December 2018 death of [American-Palestinian](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/biden-reverses-trump-policy-aid-palestinians-fails-condemn-recent-terror-wave-against-israelis) Isaam Akel, who was sentenced to life in prison for violating a law prohibiting the sale of land to Israelis.

Israelis forming settlements in the West Bank has been a point of contention between peace negotiators on both sides of the conflict as efforts to create a two-state solution, based on borders before Israel's 1967 military victory over several Arab states, have failed.

The Palestinian Authority is the governing body of parts of the West Bank and controlled the Gaza Strip, which is now controlled by Hamas, a group the State Department considers to be a [terrorist organization.](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/terrorism)

Because the Palestinians acceded to the Rome Statute in 2015, the ILF said the Palestinian Authority is liable for the captivity of Israelis in Gaza, including the bodies of Hadar Goldin and Oron Shaul, Israeli soldiers who were captured by Hamas in the 2014 Gaza War and later died in captivity.

Hamas continues to hold both bodies and has demanded the release of prisoners in Israel for their return.

[President Biden](https://www.foxnews.com/category/person/joe-biden)met with Abbas last week during a visit to Israel where he "reaffirmed the enduring ties between the Palestinian and American peoples and underscored his commitment to a two-state solution," the White House said.

"Mr. President, we have respected the resolutions of international legitimacy and signed agreements, and we have committed ourselves to renouncing violence and fighting terrorism in our region and the world," Abbas said in a joint statement. "Mr. President, we look forward to the efforts of your administration to turn the page on the Israeli occupation of our land and the acts of racial discrimination, apartheid against our people; and to stop unilateral actions that undermine the two-state solution."

Abbas has come under criticism for not holding elections for president in the territory since 2006.