**Abbas praises ICC decision to probe possible war crimes in West Bank and Gaza**

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Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas praises the International Criminal Court’s decision to open an investigation into possible war crimes committed by Israelis and Palestinians since 2014 in the West Bank and Gaza.

Abbas’s office waited almost a whole day to respond to the ruling, well after many other officials in Fatah and the Palestinian Authority.

“The Palestinian Presidency expresses its great appreciation for the [ICC] prosecutor’s decision regarding the opening of a criminal investigation into the situation in Palestine, which includes the Gaza war, settlements, and the issue of prisoners in the Israeli occupation’s jails,” Abbas’s office says.

Abbas praises what he calls “the independence and courage of the Prosecutor in defending truth and freedom.”