**FM Ashkenazi on ICC announcement regarding the initiation of an investigation**

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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<https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2021/Pages/FM-Ashkenazi-on-ICC-announcement-3-March-2021.aspx>

FM Ashkenazi: The decision to open an investigation is morally bankrupt and legally flawed. The decision is a waste of resources by a biased institution that has lost all legitimacy, and which operates as a political body rather than a judicial one.​

(Communicated by the MFA Spokesperson)

Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabi Ashkenazi today (Wednesday, March 3, 2021) issued the following statement regarding the International Criminal Court’s decision to initiate an investigation:

“The Prosecutor’s decision to open an investigation is morally bankrupt and legally flawed.

“This is a political decision made by a Prosecutor at the end of her term in an attempt to dictate her successor’s priorities. It turns the Court into a tool in the hands of extremist actors and emboldens terrorist organizations and anti-Semitic groups.

“The fact that the murderous terrorist organization Hamas has welcomed this decision is the best evidence of its moral worth.

“Israel is a democratic state with an independent and effective legal system, and is not a member of the Court. The decision to open an investigation against Israel is a breach of the Court’s mandate. It is a waste of the international community’s resources by a biased institution that has lost all legitimacy, and which operates as a political body rather than a judicial one.

“The Prosecutor’s decision will only further polarize Israelis and Palestinians, and distance them from the very dialogue needed to resolve the conflict between them.

“The State of Israel will take every necessary measure to protect its citizens and soldiers from legal persecution.

“We call on countries who value the protection of the international legal system from politicization to reject the Prosecutor’s decision and not to cooperate with it.”​​