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Israel's clashes with the ICC over the past decade – a timeline of events

From surveillance operations to public condemnation, here is a recap of Israel's attacks on the ICC:

- **January 7, 2015:** It was announced that Palestine was set to [become a state party to the ICC](#), giving ICC jurisdiction over the territory. This was [finalised on April 1, 2015](#).
- **January 16, 2015:** ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda opened a [preliminary examination](#) into the “situation in Palestine”.
- **January 17, 2015:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu panned Bensouda's decision as “absurd”.
- **February 2015:** Two unknown men showed up at Bensouda's residence in The Hague and gave her cash and an Israeli phone, saying it was a gift from an unknown German woman. The ICC concluded this was likely Israel's way of telling Bensouda it “knew where she lived”, according to a Guardian [investigation](#) published on May 28, 2024.
- **2017-2019:** An Israeli delegation, led by prominent Israeli lawyer and diplomat [Tal Becker](#), conducted secret meetings with the ICC, challenging Bensouda's jurisdiction over Palestine regarding the investigation opened in 2015.
- **December 20, 2019:** Bensouda [announced that the preliminary examination](#) of the situation in Palestine found a “reasonable basis” to conclude that Israel and Palestinian armed groups had both committed war crimes in the occupied territory and the case met all criteria under the Rome Statute for the opening of an investigation.
- **2019-2021:** The director of Mossad at the time, Cohen intensified efforts to persuade Bensouda against the investigation. Bensouda formally disclosed to a small group within the ICC that she had been “personally threatened”.
- **2019-2021:** Five sources familiar with Mossad's activities told the Guardian that the spy agency routinely listened to phone calls between [Bensouda](#) and her staff and Palestinians. Israeli operatives also hacked into the emails of Palestinian groups in contact with the ICC. [Mossad](#) also obtained classified recording transcripts of Bensouda's husband, a Gambian Moroccan businessman.
- **March 2020:** An Israeli government delegation reportedly held discussions in Washington, DC with senior US officials about “a joint Israeli-American struggle” against the ICC.
- **June 2020:** Senior US officials said they would impose [sanctions on ICC officials](#), saying they had unspecified information regarding “financial corruption and malfeasance at the highest levels of the office of the prosecutor”.

- **February 2021:** Bensouda stepped down as ICC prosecutor and [Karim Khan](#) assumed the role.
- **March 3, 2021:** Bensouda confirmed that the ICC had initiated an investigation into the “situation in Palestine”.
- **April 2, 2021:** US President Joe Biden’s administration lifted sanctions on Bensouda imposed during predecessor Donald Trump’s presidential term. However, the US made it clear that it continued to “disagree strongly with the ICC’s actions” related to Palestine.
- **April 8, 2021:** Netanyahu [said Israel does not recognise the ICC’s authority](#) to investigate possible [war crimes](#) in Palestine.
- **April 30, 2024:** Netanyahu called on “leaders of the free world” to oppose possible arrest warrants by the ICC of Israeli officials, before the warrant applications were filed.
- **May 20, 2024:** The investigation launched in 2021 concluded with Bensouda’s successor Khan [requesting arrest warrants](#) against Netanyahu and Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant alongside three Hamas leaders: Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Diab Ibrahim al-Masri and Ismail Haniyeh. In his statement, Khan said: “I insist that all attempts to impede, intimidate or improperly influence the officials of this court must cease immediately.”
- **May 21, 2024:** Netanyahu deemed the arrest warrant requests a “disgraceful attempt” to interfere in Israel’s war on Gaza.
- **May 29, 2024:** Netanyahu said he was surprised and disappointed by Biden’s refusal to support sanctions against the ICC. He said this in an interview for Sirius XM’s The Morgan Ortagus Show, which is set to air on June 1. Recordings of the interview were obtained by [Politico](#).