Carney says Canada will arrest Netanyahu if he visits, in keeping with ICC warrant

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/carney-says-canada-will-arrest-netanyahu-if-he-visits-in-keeping-with-icc-warrant/>

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said he would honor the International Criminal Court’s arrest warrant for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and have him arrested if he traveled to Canada in an interview published on Friday.

Asked during an interview on Bloomberg Podcasts, aired Friday, whether Canada would arrest Netanyahu, Carney decisively responded, “yes” but did not elaborate.

The Canadian prime minister also said that [recognizing a Palestinian state](https://www.timesofisrael.com/following-france-and-uk-canada-says-it-will-recognize-palestinian-state-in-september/) had been a priority for his policies but that it was not the end.

“The end is a free and viable Palestinian state living side by side, peace and security, the State of Israel,” he said.

While Canadian policy since 1947 has been to support a two-state solution, Carney explained that his decision to formally recognize a Palestinian state now was because “the actions of Netanyahu’s government were explicitly designed to end any possibility of a Palestinian state in violation of the UN Charter and going against Canadian government policy of any political stripe since 1947.”

“We did this because the prospect was receding as opposed to viewing it as any sort of panacea, game changer, fundamentally immediately leading to the outcome that we and others want,” he said.

Acknowledging US opposition to the move taken by countries around the world, Carney argued that ultimately, the “common objective is the same.”

Speaking to Canadian news outlet [The Globe and Mail](https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-netanyahu-carney-icc-warrant-israel-gaza/) on Saturday, Netanyahu’s political advisor Ophir Falk panned Carney’s comments, saying he “had hoped that after Canada endorsed [US] President Trump’s Middle East 20-Point Peace Plan [for Gaza], Prime Minister Carney would retract his policy of appeasing terrorism and betraying Canada’s traditional ally.”

Falk added that Carney should “welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu, the leader of the lone Jewish state and only democracy in the Middle East, to Canada.”

Netanyahu and former defense minister Yoav Gallant both face charges of “criminal responsibility” for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity during the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Alongside those arrest warrants, issued last November, the ICC issued similar warrants for Hamas leaders Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif, and Ismail Haniyeh over the terrorist organization’s October 7, 2023, attack on Israel, in which some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed and 251 were taken hostage. All three have since been killed by Israel.

The Hamas-run Gaza health ministry says more than 68,000 people in the Strip were killed or presumed dead in the two-year war, though the toll cannot be verified and does not differentiate between civilians and fighters. Israel says it had killed over 22,000 combatants in battle as of August and another 1,600 terrorists inside Israel during the October 7 onslaught.

A fragile ceasefire has been in effect since last week, during which Hamas released all the living hostages it held in exchange for close to 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, including 250 with life sentences. As per the agreement, Hamas is also supposed to return all the bodies of hostages that it still holds, but there are still 16 left behind, which the terrorist organization claims it cannot reach or locate.

Israel staunchly rejects the charges filed by the ICC, insisting all its warfighting is in accordance with international law and pointing to efforts to avoid civilian casualties and facilitate the entry of international aid.

Israel also [disputes the court’s jurisdiction](https://www.timesofisrael.com/icc-rejects-israeli-appeal-against-arrest-warrants-for-netanyahu-and-gallant/) over the matter since the country is not a member of the court.

Under the warrants, all nations party to the Rome Statute are required to arrest Netanyahu if he arrives in their countries.

Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, and Switzerland have all explicitly said they would honor the arrest warrants if Netanyahu traveled to their countries.

Others, including Hungary, Argentina, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Poland, have said they won’t arrest Netanyahu. Meanwhile, France and Italy said they believed he had immunity as a leader of a state not a party to the court. Other countries, like the UK and Sweden, merely indicated they may make an arrest or said they would make a decision if it became relevant.

The ICC has no enforcement methods, and relies on the cooperation of party nations to carry out the warrant.