# Palestinians gear up to renew international fight against Israel

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After a few months of quiet, the Palestinians are preparing to renew their international campaign against Israel.

Now that the Palestinians have joined the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, they can be expected to reach out to international organizations and demand that they condemn Israel, or even seek to have Israel suspended from international organizations and institutions.

The Palestinians' claim is a familiar one – they are alleging that Israel is an occupying entity in land belonging to the Palestinian Authority and is acting in violation of international law. They claim that Israel confiscates privately owned Palestinian land to expand settlements; restricts freedom of movement for the Palestinian population in Judea and Samaria; prevents access to potable water and water for agricultural purposes; does not allow Palestinians to work farmland that they own; and regularly violates Palestinians' civil rights.

The PA has already begun to take steps against various Israeli groups, particularly the Regavim association and the watchdog group NGO Monitor, both of which the Palestinians have declared to be "terrorist organizations" in response to a decision by Defense Minister Benny Gantz to label six Palestinian rights organizations terrorist groups.

US President Joe Biden's transitional team sent the Palestinians messages that the new US administration expected the PA to keep a low profile with its demands for an ICC investigation into Israel and the IDF, and its demands that Israel be suspended from international entities.

The Palestinians acquiesced to the American request, but according to one official in Ramallah, the PA saw approval for some 3,000 new settlement housing units as a "deal breaker," on top of the little attention the Biden administration has devoted to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Biden has yet to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and Israel and the PA are not expected to renew peace talks any time soon.

A senior official in the Palestinian Ministry of Justice even told *Israel Hayom* that the ministry had reconvened a panel of Palestinian legal scholars and charged them with the task of putting together lawsuits against Israel to be filed in international tribunals and organizations. Additional legal claims will target specific Israeli officials, both military and civilian, with allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and systematic violation of Palestinian human rights.

The Palestinian official stressed that to compile the lawsuits and file them, the team was seeking help from legal scholars around the world. The Palestinian team has recently submitted additional documents to the ICC, as well as testimonies from Palestinians about alleged crimes committed against them.

As the Palestinians prepare to renew their fight to pressure Britain to retract the Balfour Declaration of 104 years ago, Abbas ordered all Palestinian diplomatic missions worldwide to fly the PA flag at half mast on the anniversary of the declaration.

The PA has even filed a suit against Britain in the ICC, claiming that the Balfour Declaration effectively caused Israeli "occupation" of the territories, and the alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity supposedly committed against the Palestinian people there.