Law professors sue in S.F. to lift Trump sanctions on international court prosecutors

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Legal advisers to the International Criminal Court, including two Bay Area law professors, have sued to challenge the Trump administration’s sanctions on the court’s prosecutors for investigating Israel and U.S. actions in Afghanistan — sanctions that the Biden administration has left intact so far.

The penalties include potential criminal charges against anyone, including the law professors, who provides information to the international court’s prosecutors or assists them in any way, the advisers said [in their lawsuit](https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/sadat-v-trump-motion-preliminary-injunction), filed Friday in federal court in San Francisco. They said the government’s orders violated freedom of speech and federal law.

The 123-nation court, which is based in the Netherlands, announced an investigation in March 2020 into possible war crimes by combatants in Afghanistan, including the government, Taliban militias and U.S. military forces and CIA personnel, but has put the investigation on hold to consider the Afghan government’s own examination of the events.

The court proposed a separate review in December 2019 of possible war crimes by all sides in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. It began its investigation two weeks ago after a branch of the court concluded that Palestine was a proper participant.