ICC requests arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Hamas leaders over ‘war crimes’

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<https://www.foxnews.com/world/icc-requests-arrest-warrants-netanyahu-hamas-leaders-war-crimes>

An International Criminal Court prosecutor announced Monday that he has filed applications for arrest warrants against [Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,](https://www.foxnews.com/category/person/benjamin-netanyahu) Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Hamas leaders for allegedly committing ‘war crimes’ during the conflict in Gaza.

Prosecutor Karim Khan said in a statement that based on evidence collected and examined by his office, he has ‘reasonable grounds’ to believe Netanyahu and Gallant ‘bear criminal responsibility for... war crimes and crimes against humanity committed on the territory of the State of Palestine.’

He said those alleged crimes include ‘starvation of civilians as a method of warfare’ and ‘intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population.’

Khan also said he is seeking arrest warrants for Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, its top political leader Ismail Haniyeh and its military commander Mohammed Dief.

He alleged that since the [Oct. 7 massacre in Israel,](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/world-regions/israel) the three are criminally responsible for ‘extermination’ and ‘murder as a crime against humanity,’ taking hostages as a war crime and rape and other acts of sexual violence.

‘During my own visit to Kibbutz Be’eri and Kibbutz Kfar Aza, as well as to the site of Supernova Music Festival in Re’im, I saw the [devastating scenes of these attacks](https://www.foxnews.com/category/world/conflicts) and the profound impact of the unconscionable crimes charged in the applications filed today,’ Khan said.

‘Speaking with survivors, I heard how the love within a family, the deepest bonds between a parent and a child, were contorted to inflict unfathomable pain through calculated cruelty and extreme callousness,’ he added. ‘These acts demand accountability.’

Khan also said his office has found ‘reasonable grounds to believe that hostages taken from Israel have been kept in inhumane conditions, and that some have been subject to sexual violence, including rape, while being held in captivity.’

Israeli war cabinet member and opposition leader Benny Gantz blasted the ICC’s announcement Monday, saying ‘the prosecutor’s position to apply for arrest warrants is in itself a crime of historic proportion to be remembered for generations.’

‘While Israel fights with one of the strictest moral codes in history, while complying with international law and boasting a robust independent judiciary – drawing parallels between the leaders of a democratic country determined to defend itself from despicable terror to leaders of a blood-thirsty terror organization is a deep distortion of justice and blatant moral bankruptcy,’ he added.

Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the move is a ‘historic disgrace that will be remembered forever,’ The Associated Press reports.

Khan said in his statement, ‘The independent judges of the International Criminal Court are the sole arbiters as to whether the necessary standard for the issuance of warrants of arrest has been met.

‘Should they grant my applications and issue the requested warrants,’ he continued. ‘I will then work closely with the Registrar in all efforts to apprehend the named individuals.’

Israel and the U.S. are not members of the ICC and do not recognize its jurisdiction. The Palestinian Authority, meanwhile, became a member in 2015.

‘The move by the ICC prosecutor turns right and wrong on its head by equating the self-defense of the democratic Jewish state – as necessarily conducted by its prime minister and defense minister – with the genocidal ambitions of Palestinian terrorists,’ Anne Bayefsky, the director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust and president of Human Rights Voices, told Fox News.

‘Second, it attempts to criminalize the self-determination of the Jewish people. Third, it is a direct result of the policy of the Biden administration, that has systematically undermined Israel's war of survival at every step, even questioning its legality, and effectively gave a wink-wink to the prosecutor to move forward,’ she added. But most importantly for the American Congress, it directly invokes American law, which calls for immediate, direct actions to defend Israel and sanction the court and its actors for upending law and justice.