Fresh complaint submitted to ICC over U.S.-Israel war crimes in Palestine

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A new request has been submitted to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate senior officials from the United States and Israel over alleged war crimes committed in Palestine. They include Donald Trump, Benjamin Netanyahu, Mike Pompeo and Jared Kushner.

Professor William Schabas, who is leading on the submission to the Office of the ICC Prosecutor, announced details of the complaint at an online press conference today. It calls for a war crimes investigation into senior officials leading the Proposed Peace Plan, known as the “deal of the century”. The plan seeks to annex portions of the sovereign territory of the State of Palestine.

Schabas submitted the communication on behalf of four Palestinians who are directly affected by the plan. The communication highlights that the proposed plan, which is being implemented unilaterally without the consent of Palestine, violates international law, specifically in relation to illegal settlements and the threatened annexation of Palestinian territory.

ICC Prosecutors are urged to investigate the threatened annexation of portions of the sovereign territory of the State of Palestine through the implementation of the plan. The communication emphasises that there is credible evidence that Trump, Pompeo, Kushner and other senior US officials are complicit in acts that may amount to war crimes relating to the transfer of populations into occupied territory and the annexation of sovereign territory of the State of Palestine.

Speaking at the press conference today Schabas, Professor of International Law at London’s Middlesex University, explained that he had submitted the complaint earlier this morning at the request of prominent Palestinians. He explained that the complaint submitted to the ICC brings to the attention of prosecutors in The Hague the relevance of the “Peace Plan” to the wider takeover of Palestine. This morning’s communication urges the ICC to consider the plan within its wider investigation on alleged war crimes committed by Israel.

In December, the ICC’s office of the prosecutor ended a five-year preliminary examination of the “situation in the state of Palestine”, and concluded there were reasonable grounds to believe that war crimes have been, or are being, committed in the occupied West Bank. Earlier this month, the ICC confirmed that it will proceed with its investigation into Israeli war crimes despite the continued application of the 1993 Oslo Accords. US President Trump reacted to the ICC decision by imposing sanctions against prosecutors and officials of the intergovernmental organisation. He signed an executive order to block ICC officials directly involved in investigating American troops and intelligence officials and those of allied nations from entering the US.

The communication to the ICC highlights that the senior US and Israeli officials who are implementing the plan, are doing so in the full knowledge that it violates the human rights of all Palestinian citizens, including their right to self-determination, citizenship and freedom of movement within the Occupied Palestinian Territory.