Analysis: Israel elevates the ICC over the United Nations

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<http://m.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Analysis-Israel-elevates-the-ICC-over-the-United-Nations-466745#article=7783Qzk0RUI0NDgzQUNDMDk4RUM4NzBCRTU3RDc2RURDNjQ>=

David Ben Gurion is famous for addressing the UN with the dismissive "oom shmoom" - meaning essentially that the UN does not matter and also that Israel cannot trust it.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been at least as dismissive of the UN as Ben Gurion and refused to cooperate with the international body on almost any issue involving war crimes allegations.

But that may all be about to change.

If Netanyahu grants a request by the [International Criminal Court](http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Israel-considers-approving-ICC-request-to-visit-466726) Prosecutor to send representatives to meet with Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the coming weeks, which The Jerusalem Post confirmed on Friday that he is considering, it could be a game-changer.

Israel has not cooperated with numerous UN and other international investigations of alleged war crimes in the past, refusing UN officials entry when they requested to come to collect evidence.

Neither officials from the UNHRC’s Goldstone Report on the 2008-9 Gaza war or from its McGowan-Davis Report on the 2014 Gaza war were permitted to enter the country.

Netanyahu also massively attacked the ICC Prosecutor's legitimacy in January 2015 when it recognized Palestine as a state for its purposes.

So allowing the ICC Prosecutor's representatives to visit would be nearly unprecedented (Israel has had some limited cooperation with UN Secretary General Board of Inquiries in the past.) The trip would likely be limited to public relations and for educating the Israeli public about the ICC and not to gather evidence regarding war crimes connected to the 2014 Gaza war or the settlement enterprise.

That in some ways makes it less revolutionary.

But for Netanyahu to give the ICC any kind of public podium in Israel is a major change, even as there has been quiet cooperation between Israeli legal and ICC officials since July 2015 on limited jurisdictional issues.

The visit puts both the ICC Prosecutor's Office and Israel in virtually uncharted waters where both sides are trying to signal good-faith and compete for public opinion on a range of different domestic and international fronts.

The sides could still eventually reach an impasse with the ICC Prosecutor demanding indictments where Israel closed cases and everything could end in acrimony.

But for the first time since the [2014 Gaza war](http://www.jpost.com/Arab-Israeli-Conflict/Palestinians-submit-new-evidence-of-alleged-Israeli-war-crimes-to-ICC-430587), and in some ways the first time in decades, a major international body and Israel have taken cooperation on war crimes issues to a new level.

Stay tuned to see where it goes from here.