

*EU spokesman says all European states are obligated to execute ICC arrest warrant for Netanyahu*

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## Billboard seen in Birmingham, UK

Brussels, November 29 (RHC)-- All European Union member states are legally bound to execute arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his ousted war minister Yoav Gallant over war crimes in Gaza, an EU spokesperson says.

Peter Stano said in a statement that the 27-nation bloc is “strongly committed to international criminal justice and the fight against impunity.” The bloc supports the ICC and “the principles set out in the Rome Statute” – which founded the court – as well as the court’s “independence and impartiality,” he added.

The ICC’s mandate is “to prosecute the most serious crimes under international law,” the spokesman stated, stressing that all EU member states “that have ratified the Rome Statute ... are under an obligation to execute arrest warrants issued by the ICC.”

On November 21, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant over their legal responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated during Israel’s war on Gaza.

Most world leaders, states and humanitarian organizations praised the court’s decision to issue long-awaited arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant. They said arrest warrants issued for Netanyahu and Gallant were “binding” and should be implemented.

A flurry of official announcements followed from European leaders claiming they would uphold the decision and meet their obligations to arrest the Israeli prime minister should he step foot in their territories.

The court determined there were “reasonable grounds” that Israel’s siege and assault on Gaza “created conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of the civilian population.”

Since October of last year, the American-Israeli genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip has claimed the lives of nearly 44,363 people, leaving significant portions of the Palestinian enclave in ruins.

The regime’s acts of aggression have also resulted in nearly 3,600 deaths and over 15,200 injuries among the Lebanese population.

Some European member states of ICC, including France and Germany, had indicated that Netanyahu would be arrested if he entered their country, however, they later withdrew their stances and claimed that Netanyahu enjoyed immunity from the arrest warrants.

But legal experts and rights groups say all states have a duty to cooperate with the court under the Rome Statute of the ICC, and “that duty of cooperation extends to giving effect to arrest warrants.”

Following the issuance of the arrest warrants, the United States, Israel’s main benefactor and an accomplice in the Gaza genocide, swiftly rejected the ICC’s decision, with White House spokeswoman, Karine Jean-Pierre, expressing “deep concern.”

U.S. politicians from both major parties also condemned the court’s ruling, with Senator Lindsey Graham, an ally of President-elect Donald Trump, calling for sanctions against ICC officials.

DAWN, a U.S.-based rights group, that had welcomed the arrest warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant, has warned Biden administration officials – including Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Pentagon chief Lloyd Austin – that they could be next.

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