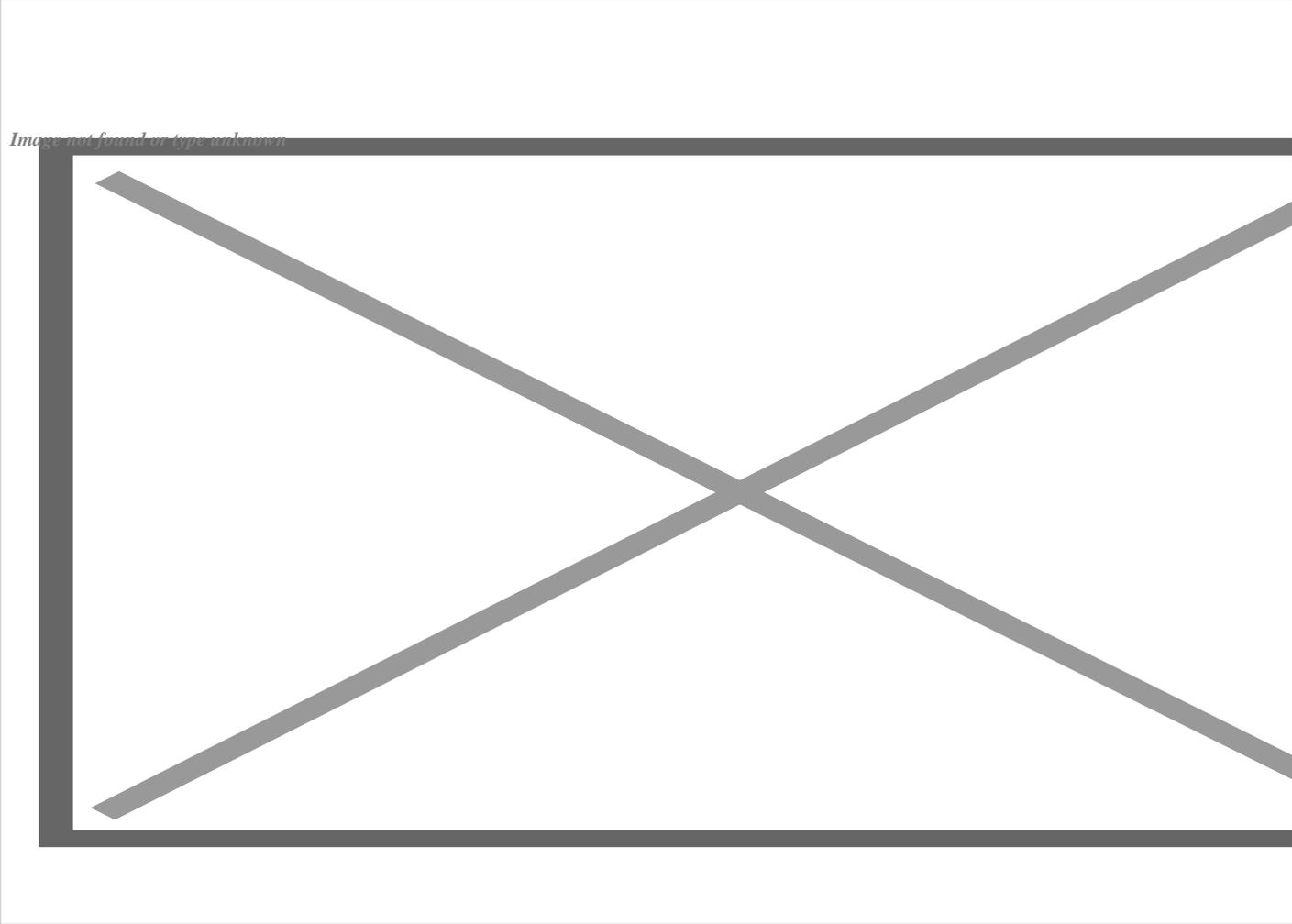


ICC move to probe Israel for war crimes ‘opens the door’ for justice in Palestine

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The Hague, February 12 (RHC)-- A UN expert says the International Criminal Court (ICC)'s ruling on its jurisdiction to investigate Israeli war crimes in the occupied territories "opens the door" for justice in Palestine.

Michael Lynk, the UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, made the remarks as he was referring to the recent ICC ruling that it has jurisdiction to investigate the atrocities committed by the Israeli military in the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip since 1967.

"The leading political organs of the United Nations have repeatedly failed to enforce their own significant body of resolutions on the Israeli occupation," Lynk said. "This ruling opens the door for credible

allegations of Rome Statute crimes to finally be investigated and potentially reach the trial stage at the ICC.”

Stressing that the ruling is a “significant step forward in the quest for justice and accountability,” Lynk also called on the international community to support the ICC’s move. The UN special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories censured Israel's protracted occupation and said the international community has permitted a "culture of exceptionalism" to prevail.

Lynk noted that despite a number of authoritative UN reports urging for accountability and for Israel to investigate credible allegations of crimes, none of those calls for justice had been headed. "Had international legal obligations been purposely enforced years ago, the occupation and the conflict would have been justly resolved and there would have been no need for the ICC process."

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