

World leaders hail ICC arrest warrants for Israeli war criminals Netanyahu and Gallant

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Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) along with top military brass on November 19,

2024. (Photo by AFP)

United Nations, November 22 (RHC)-- Most world leaders, states and humanitarian organizations have praised the International Criminal Court's decision to issue long-awaited arrest warrants for Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and ousted war minister Yoav Gallant. The notable exception is -- of course -- the United States.

They said arrest warrants issued for Netanyahu and Gallant were "binding" and should be implemented.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said during a visit to the Jordanian capital Amman that the decision to issue these warrants was "not political," and that the court's decision should be "respected and implemented."

"It is not a political decision. It is a decision of a court, of a court of justice, of an international court of justice. And the decision of the court has to be respected and implemented," Borrell said

"This decision is a binding decision and all states, all state parties of the court, which include all members of the European Union, are binding to implement this court decision," he said after a joint news conference with Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi.

Safadi, for his part, said that the International Criminal Court's decision must be respected and implemented, adding the Palestinians deserved justice after Israel's "war crimes" in Gaza.

He said the decision also serves as a message to the international community to take practical steps to stop "the massacres being committed in Gaza."

The French Foreign Ministry spokesman says that France's reaction to the decision will be in line with the court's statutes.

Netherlands ready to act upon ICC arrest warrant for Netanyahu

The Netherlands is prepared to act upon the arrest warrant issued by the ICC against Netanyahu if needed, Dutch news agency ANP has reported, citing the country's Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp.

If the Israeli leader comes to Dutch soil, he will be arrested, Veldkamp said in the House of Representatives, local outlet Nos reported.

The Netherlands will also avoid "non-essential" contact with Netanyahu and Gallant. "The Netherlands implements the Rome Statute 100 percent," the foreign minister said.

Ireland calls ICC arrest warrants 'an extremely significant step'

The Republic of Ireland's Prime Minister Simon Harris said the ICC's arrest warrants were a significant and serious step. "The decision... is an extremely significant step," Harris said. "These charges could not be more serious."

"Ireland respects the role of the International Criminal Court. Anyone in a position to assist it in carrying out its vital work must now do so with urgency," he added.

Ireland's Foreign Ministry also said that countries must respect the ICC's "independence and impartiality, with no attempts made to undermine the court."

The warrants issued today "follows the court's determination that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the alleged crimes were committed" by Netanyahu and Gallant, the ministry's statement added.

Ireland has long supported Palestinian statehood, going so far as to independently recognize Palestine this May.

Netanyahu 'now officially a wanted man': Amnesty chief

Rights group Amnesty International said that Netanyahu was "now officially a wanted man" after the ICC's decision Thursday. "Prime Minister Netanyahu is now officially a wanted man," Amnesty Secretary General Agnes Callamard said in a statement. "We urge all ICC member states, and non-states parties including the United States and other allies of Israel, to demonstrate their respect for the court's decision... by arresting and handing over those wanted by the ICC," Callamard added.

"ICC member states and the whole international community must stop at nothing until these individuals are brought to trial before the ICC's independent and impartial judges."

Hamas welcomes ICC warrants

The Palestinian resistance group said that the International Criminal Court's issuance of arrest warrants for Netanyahu and his former war minister is an "important step towards justice."

"[It] can lead to redress for the victims in general, but it remains limited and symbolic if it is not supported by all means by all countries around the world," Hamas political bureau member Basem Naim said in a statement.

War criminals must be prosecuted: Palestinian official

Palestinian official Wasel Abu Yousef, a Member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) said that though this decision was long overdue, it is still in the right direction.

"It is an important decision in the shadow of the genocide against the Palestinian people that has been going on for 411 days," he said, adding that the "War criminals must be prosecuted."

Observers say the court's arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant are important, as Israel's allies, such as the US and the UK and Germany, have been "reluctant" to call his actions war crimes.

The United States, which is the main backer of Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza, has called for sanctions against ICC.

Long-serving Republican U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham said that it was time for the US government to penalize the ICC for its warrants against Netanyahu and Gallant, he said.

U.S. officials can be personally liable for Israeli abuses: Rights group

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

"By continuing to provide military assistance to Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Netanyahu, despite credible accusations of war crimes by the ICC, US leaders ... are exposing themselves to personal liability under international law," Raed Jarrar, DAWN's advocacy director, said in a statement.

"Article 25(3)(c) of the Rome Statute outlines clear criminal liability for aiding and abetting war crimes, which applies to individuals in non-member states like the US when their actions enable violations under ICC jurisdiction."

The ICC said that there are reasonable grounds to believe that Netanyahu and Gallant were involved in actions constituting crimes against humanity and war crimes under its jurisdiction.

The ICC prosecutor said the crimes include starvation of civilians as a method of warfare and intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population.

In May, the prosecutor had applied for warrants of arrest for Netanyahu and Gallant.

Now the 124 ICC member states are technically obliged to arrest Netanyahu and his former war minister if they travel there.

Numerous human rights organizations have documented horrific Israeli abuses in Gaza, including forced displacement, the targeting of civilians and the use of hunger as a weapon of war.

Fourteen member states voted in favor of the draft resolution on Wednesday, but it was blocked by the U.S., the Israeli regime's main ally and partner in crime.

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