



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS

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IADL DELEGATION MEETS INTERNATIONAL COURT PROSECUTION TEAM

On Monday 28 May 2018 a high level delegation of IADL Bureau members¹ met at the International Criminal Court (ICC) with representatives² of the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) to press for urgent legal action on Palestine.

IADL, whose member organizations include the Palestinian Center for Human Rights and the Palestine Bar Association, expressed its support for the ICC and its appreciation for the Chief Prosecutor's recent condemnation of the use of live ammunition against civilians in the Gaza Strip.

However, the delegation voiced IADL's concern that, almost four years after Palestine became a Member State under the Rome Statute, the numerous detailed, credible and objective reports provided to the OTP of crimes against humanity, violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention and other international law crimes, including the crime of *apartheid*, have not progressed beyond the OTP's *preliminary examination* stage and on to its *investigation* stage. These violations of law are incorporated into the Rome Statute which created the ICC.

IADL affirmed its commitment to assisting the OTP in its work by organizing a worldwide lawyers' campaign in support of investigating and eventually prosecuting all persons credibly suspected of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the crimes of *apartheid*, widespread and systematic murder, forced population removals, and subjecting the civilian population to intolerable conditions of life amounting to a siege.

Our delegation emphasized that international political pressure must not be allowed to undermine the rule of law and the quest for a just peace and that IADL understands the many difficulties faced by the Chief Prosecutor, including lack of adequate funding for the OTP's investigative resources. However, the credibility of the ICC must not be undermined by further delay. The longer the delay in commencing a full investigation of these crimes, the more will Israeli forces believe they can act with impunity.

The longer this situation is allowed to continue, the more the ICC itself will lose both credibility and authority as a force for the rule of law.

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¹ Jan Fermon, IADL Secretary General; Prof. Lennox S. Hinds, IADL Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York; Micòl Savia, IADL Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva; Richard J Harvey, IADL Bureau member, Barrister, Garden Court Chambers, London; Carlos Orjuela, IADL Bureau member, Solicitor, London.

² Dr Emeric Rogier, Head of Situation Analysis Section; Ms Amitis Khojasteh, Situation Analyst.