**Did ICC prosecutors engage with Hamas when drafting case against Israel?**

By: Lahav Harkov

Jerusalem Post

December 30, 2019

<https://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/ICC-prosecutors-met-with-Hamas-when-drafting-case-against-Israel-612542>

Prosecutors from the International Criminal Court did not deny that they could have engaged with representatives of the terrorist groups Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) when preparing their case to investigate Israel for alleged war crimes.

When asked whether it heard arguments from Hamas, the ICC told to The Jerusalem Post that it engages with all kinds of groups within Israeli and Palestinian society. However, it added that its official focal point is with the Palestinian Authority, not Hamas.

Still, the PA’s official committee, appointed by President Mahmoud Abbas to handle matters related to the ICC, which definitely engaged with the court, includes representatives of Hamas and PFLP, among them individuals with known terrorist ties.

PLO secretary-general Saeb Erekat, head of the ICC committee, said on official Palestinian TV earlier this month – the day after the probe of Israel and the Palestinians was announced – that Hamas had been involved.

“This committee includes all the bodies of the Palestinian political spectrum without exception… We worked together as a team,” he stated in a video translated by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). “Dr. Ghazi Hammad, for example, was elected as the committee’s spokesman… He is one of Hamas’s leaders. There were six Hamas members in the committee. Khalida Jarrar – may she be released [from prison] soon – represented the PFLP.

"I don’t want to go into the names, but I will just say that no [faction] was left out,” he said.

Erekat also thanked Qatar for covering the PA’s legal fees.

Jarrar, the head of the PFLP in the West Bank, was arrested in late October for incitement and involvement in terror.

Several NGOs whose staff members are affiliated with the PFLP also testified to the ICC against Israel, such as the Al-Dameer Association for Human Rights and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, both based in Gaza.