Ex-Shin Bet Chief Flees Denmark Following Leftist Group's Complaint to Police

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Former Shin Bet security service director Carmi Gillon left Denmark in a hurry Saturday after a complaint was filed against him with Danish police by a pro-Palestinian organization, presumably alleging his involvement with torture.

Gillon, the domestic security service's chief in the mid 1990s,  was invited to the Copenhagen Jewish Film Festival for a screening of the documentary “The Gatekeepers” – in which he appears along with five other former heads of the Shin Bet – and delivered a lecture following the screening.

However, after Gillon’s arrival in Denmark last week, the Israel Embassy in Copenhagen learned that extreme left-wing activists had filed a complaint against him with the police. The Israeli ambassador contacted local authorities to try to determine whether Gillon was in danger of being arrested. Gillon himself was also apprised of the situation and decided to move up his departure from Copenhagen. Meanwhile, the Danish prosecutor’s office rejected the complaint outright due to lack of evidence of Gillon’s involvement in torture.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor said the complaint filed against Gillon was baseless, politically motivated and should be rejected, as in previous cases.

“Behind the complaint are extremist groups that are trying to silence people, stifle freedom of expression and cause intimidation,” he said.

“These same groups,” he continued, “are trying to conceal from the public in Copenhagen the complex reality that Israel faces on a daily basis in order to maintain its security and democratic character in the best manner possible.”

Gillon headed the Shin Bet in the mid-1990s, when rising Israeli political tensions over the Oslo Accords culminated in the November 1995 assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin.

A few months before the assassination, Gillon warned that fiery rhetoric by right-wing figures was encouraging radicals and fostering an atmosphere of violence. He left the service following the assassination.