Abbas Confidant: We’ll Take ‘Hundreds’ of IDF Soldiers to ICC This Year

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<http://www.timesofisrael.com/abbas-confidant-we-will-take-hundreds-of-idf-soldiers-to-icc-this-year/>

A prominent Palestinian journalist and confidant of PA President Mahmoud Abbas said Sunday the Palestinians were collecting the names and photographs of “hundreds” of Israel Defense Forces soldiers, with the intention of bringing them to the International Criminal Court in 2017.

“In 2017, we are going to The Hague,” said Nasser Laham, according to Channel 2. “We have hundreds of pages of names of IDF officers. Every pilot and every officer and every soldier — we have his photo, we have his name, and we are waiting for him at The Hague.”

“If we are successful with one, just one, it will be a different world,” the editor of the Palestinian Ma’an news agency was quoted saying.

In his remarks, Laham urged the Palestinians to renounce violence and allow the Palestinian leadership to focus on international efforts to prosecute Israeli military officials.

 “I told my people in a live broadcast — in suits and ties we will take the Israelis to The Hague, we will handcuff them,” he said. “Don’t use violence, don’t explode. This is a war without bullets. Just wait, give us another chance.”

Since the 2014 Gaza war, Palestinian officials have sought to prosecute Israel in the international court. Palestinians formally asked the ICC in 2015 to investigate the Jewish state, which is not a party to the treaty that governs the court, for alleged war crimes.

While Israel vehemently opposes any ICC investigation, officials have said they will cooperate with the body to convince it of the competence of the state’s own court.

Laham’s remarks came as Israeli officials fumed over Friday’s UN Security Council resolution condemning settlements, which Jerusalem has argued will encourage the Palestinians to seek solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the international arena and rule out direct talks.

Also Sunday, Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal applauded the UN resolution. Speaking in Istanbul, Mashaal said the “UNSC resolution gave the world a signal about the danger of settlements that threaten our land.” The leader of the Gaza-based terror group thanked “everyone who condemned Israeli settlements,” but added the resolution is “not enough.”

Mashaal said Hamas is preparing for a new round of violence with Israel.

 “The resistance in Gaza is smuggling weapons and digging tunnels in Gaza to prepare for a confrontation with the [Israel], which will taste its woes on the edge of the Gaza Strip.”

A furious Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu [was reported on Sunday night to be attempting](http://www.timesofisrael.com/fearing-un-vote-on-principles-of-palestinian-statehood-pm-reaching-out-to-trump/) to “recruit” the incoming Trump administration and the US Congress to block another feared bid by the outgoing Obama administration to have the Security Council approve principles for a Palestinian state.

Netanyahu’s fear is that US Secretary of State John Kerry will set out principles or parameters for a Palestinian state in a speech that he has said he will deliver in the next few days on his Middle East vision. The prime minister fears that, in its final days, the Obama administration will seek to have a resolution enshrining those parameters adopted by the UN Security Council, the Channel 2 report said.

France is to hold a conference on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on January 15, and Netanyahu expects that Kerry will attend, that the Middle East Quartet — the US, UN, Russia and EU — will coordinate their positions at that summit, and that they will then turn to the Security Council in the very last days of the Obama presidency, a Channel 10 report further suggested.

Such speculation was not confirmed by the Prime Minister’s Office, but Netanyahu has made public his outrage at the Obama administration several times since Resolution 2334 was passed, claiming that the president initiated and helped draft the resolution “behind Israel’s back.” He has variously called the resolution skewed, shameful and ridiculous — in part because it brands Jerusalem’s Old City, including the Temple Mount and Western Wall, “occupied Palestinian territory.”