

## **Statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Fatou Bensouda, ahead of the Office's visit to Israel and Palestine from 5 to 10 October 2016**

As part of its commitment to promote a better understanding of the work of the Office of the Prosecutor (the "Office") of the International Criminal Court ("ICC"), a delegation from the Office will visit Israel and Palestine from 5 to 10 October 2016.

The purpose of this visit will be to undertake outreach and education activities with a view to raising awareness about the ICC and in particular, about the work of the Office; to address any misperceptions about the ICC and to explain the preliminary examination process. Such visits are standard practice, even in countries that are not State Parties to the Rome Statute.

In accordance with its usual practice at this stage of its work, the delegation will not engage in evidence collection in relation to any alleged crimes; neither will the delegation undertake site visits, or assess the adequacy of the respective legal systems to deal with crimes that fall within ICC jurisdiction.

The delegation is scheduled to travel to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramallah and will hold meetings with Israeli and Palestinian officials at the working levels. The delegation will also participate in two events at academic institutions and engage in television and newspaper interviews in both Israel and Palestine. In addition, the delegation will hold a courtesy meeting with United Nations agencies under the auspices of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process ("UNSCO"). Given the limited duration of the visit, the delegation will not engage in unscheduled events or meetings.

The Office is grateful to both the Israeli and Palestinian authorities for facilitating the visit and to UNSCO for providing logistical support.

The preliminary examination of the situation in Palestine is on-going and is following its normal course as with any other preliminary examination. The visit is not linked to any findings regarding any issue, nor will any announcement be made in that regard.

This process involves an analysis of a number of complex legal issues and a review of large volumes of documents. It is a thorough process during which the Office must be given the necessary space and time to conduct its activities, which it does in all instances independently and impartially. In this context, the Office has engaged with both Israel and Palestine and is examining all information on crimes alleged to have been committed by all parties. In the course of the visit, the Office will continue to uphold its independence and to protect the integrity of the visit and of the preliminary examination process against any attempt at politicization.

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Media inquiries will only be addressed during the visit and shall be submitted to:  
[OTPNewsDesk@icc-cpi.int](mailto:OTPNewsDesk@icc-cpi.int).

Source : Office of the Prosecutor

[From: <https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=161005-OTP-stat-Palestine>]