

As the war enters its third month, anti-Israel activists are increasingly attempting to accuse Israel of genocide, one of the most serious accusations that can be leveled in international law. The use of such a term is an insult to victims of genocides throughout history and contradicts the reality of Israel's intentions in the war, which is the result of a brutal attack on Israeli citizens by Hamas, and is aimed at destroying the terror group whose stated mission is to wipe Israel off the map.

- This week, South Africa [filed](#) a case against Israel in the United Nation's highest court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), alleging that Israel's actions in Gaza constitute genocide.
- It has been reported that British legal expert and human rights expert Prof. [Malcolm Shaw](#) will defend Israel's case before the court.
- Israel's National Security Advisor Tzachi Hanegbi [said](#): "The Jewish people have experienced genocide more profoundly than any other nation with six million of our people brutally slaughtered. A similar cruelty was inflicted on Israeli citizens in the massacre of October 7th, but this time we have the capability to defend ourselves against those seeking our destruction. The absurd petition against the right of the victim to self-defense is disgraceful, and we expect all civilized nations to stand with our determination."
- In response to the South African case, NSC Spokesman John Kirby this week [described](#) the filing as "meritless, counterproductive and completely without any basis in fact."
- The defined concept of genocide is relatively new, coined by a Polish lawyer in only 1944 to describe actions taken by the Nazis, including attempts to eliminate the Jewish people. The legality of the concept was [established by](#) the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- The key element in the convention is that in order for killings to be described as genocide, there must be "a proven intent on the part of perpetrators to physically destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group."
- Israeli [military](#) and [government](#) leaders have repeatedly declared that the country is at war with Hamas and not the Palestinian people. Furthermore, the IDF does not target civilians and has established multiple measures to minimize civilian casualties [in accordance](#) with international law, including by [warning and evacuating](#) civilians ahead of attacks and establishing safe zones.
- Earlier in the war NSC Spokesman John Kirby [stated](#): "Israel isn't trying to wipe the Palestinian people off the map. Israel isn't trying to wipe Gaza off the map. Israel is trying to defend itself against a genocidal terrorist threat. So if we're going to start using that word, Fine. Let's use it appropriately."
- In contrast, Hamas's [charter](#) calls for the annihilation of Israel and murder of Jews, and Hamas leaders [repeatedly](#) incite violence against Israel and vow to repeat the October 7th attacks until Israel is wiped off the map. Hamas seeks to commit genocide.