

70 Israeli Lawmakers Sign Motion to Expel Member of Knesset for Supporting ICJ Genocide Charges

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MK Ofer Cassif said that 'While those who have explicitly called for the destruction of Gaza by fire or atomic bomb are sitting at the cabinet table, I face expulsion on unproven charges of 'supporting armed struggle against Israel'

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Seventy Knesset members signed a motion on Monday to support the expulsion of lawmaker Ofer Cassif, of the left-wing Jewish and Arab Hadash-Ta'al party, from the Knesset over his support of South Africa's petition against Israel at the International Court of Justice.

Cassif signed a petition on Monday supporting South Africa's [petition to the ICJ](#) in The Hague, alleging that Israel is committing war crimes, the hearing on which will be held on Thursday and Friday.

The motion was led by MK Oded Forer of the secularist, conservative Yisrael Beitenu party. Forer's motion will likely face legal hurdles, because [the law](#) only permits lawmakers to be expelled for racist incitement or for supporting armed struggle against Israel, and it is not clear whether Cassif's actions meet these two conditions.

Lawmakers from every Knesset faction, except Labor, Ra'am, and Hadash-Ta'al, signed the motion. The law that allows a lawmaker to be removed by the Knesset proscribes that a minimum of 70 lawmakers – at least ten of whom are not members of the coalition – must sign the motion in order for it to be advanced.

The Knesset House Committee must then hold a discussion in which legal opinions on the

case are presented, and a three-quarter majority of the committee members must approve the motion to expel.

The Knesset must finally approve the motion by a majority of at least 90 votes. A lawmaker who is expelled may appeal the resolution in the High Court.

Expulsion proceedings have been [initiated against lawmakers](#) in the past, but they never reached the final stage.

In 2017, proceedings were initiated against former MK [Basel Ghattas](#) of Arab party Balad after he was documented smuggling mobile phones to security prisoners, but his resignation rendered the process redundant.

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Featured image: Joint List Lawmaker Ofer Cassif, at the Knesset in February. Credit: Noam Rivkin Fenton

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