

# Blinken Slams South Africa's Genocide Case Against Israel as 'Meritless' & 'Galling'

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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*A key aspect of Secretary of State Antony Blinken's [visit and press conference](#) in Israel on Tuesday was to make a strong show of condemning South Africa's genocide case against Israel, set to start at The Hague this week.*

*The US top diplomat blasted the case filed at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) as "meritless" and described the whole initiative as "galling" - also [saying](#) that it will be a distraction while world powers need to be focused on achieving lasting peace in Gaza.*

*"The charge of genocide is meritless," he said. But then in the same press conference he admitted that the "daily toll on civilians in Gaza, particularly children, is far too high."*

The first hearing in the case will be held Thursday, focused on South Africa's [84-page application to the ICJ](#), which describes Israel's military campaign as "genocidal in character because they are intended to bring about the destruction of a substantial part" of the Palestinian population of Gaza.

White House national security spokesperson John Kirby last week said initially, "We find this submission meritless, counterproductive and completely without any basis in fact, whatsoever."

Israel has gone on a full-court diplomatic press pushing back against the case. There's not much that the court can enforce in terms of action regardless, but a ruling against Israel would be a huge reputational black eye.

Starting last month, Israel's Foreign Ministry issued a blistering rebuke in response, rejecting

the filing “with disgust” and called Pretoria’s accusations a “blood libel” – essentially saying the South African government’s charge is being fueled by antisemitism.

Israel had also blasted Pretoria for sympathizing with terrorists who [massacred civilians](#):

“South Africa’s claim has no factual and judicial basis and is a despicable and cheap exploitation of the court,” the ministry says in a statement. “South Africa is collaborating with a terror group that calls for the destruction of the State of Israel.”

The ministry blames Hamas for the suffering of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip by attempting “to carry out genocide” on October 7, when terrorists from the Strip killed some 1,200 people and took around 240 hostages after invading southern Israel.

“We call on the International Court of Justice and the international community to reject the baseless claims of South Africa out of hand,” the response statement said further.

*Below: Israel is now tailoring its messaging in response to growing outrage and pressure...*

Our war is against Hamas, not against the people of Gaza

IDF Spokesperson explains the steps that we’re taking to help international organizations distribute humanitarian aid to civilians in Gaza.  
[pic.twitter.com/0T71gRkUQi](https://pic.twitter.com/0T71gRkUQi)

— Israel Defense Forces (@IDF) [January 9, 2024](#)

But Global South countries in particular are likely to support the case. Russia and China too have been deeply critical of Israel’s large-scale bombardment of densely populated civilian areas of the Gaza Strip. The death toll has soared past 23,000 killed, according to Palestinian sources.

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Below is a note and review on the ruling African National Congress’ (ANC) long-running [ties with the PLO](#)...

South Africa’s ruling African National Congress (ANC) has deep ties to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), stretching back to its former leader and South Africa’s first post-apartheid president, Nelson Mandela. The ANC aligned itself with the PLO and other revolutionary causes while Mandela was in prison; after his release, Mandela was a vocal supporter of the PLO and its leader Yasser Arafat, [saying in 1990 that](#) “we identify with the PLO because, just like ourselves, they are fighting for the right of self-determination.”

Decades later, that sentiment remains in the South African government, and for many ordinary South Africans who see their struggle against colonialism and apartheid in the Palestinians’ plight and decades-long struggle for self-determination. That’s particularly salient in an election year for South Africa as the ANC and its leader, President Cyril Ramaphosa, struggle to stay the dominant power there.

\*

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*Featured image: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Tel Aviv, Oct. 12, 2023. – Secretary Antony Blinken on X*

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