**Statement by H.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabi Ashkenazi**

February 5, 2021

Israel Prime Minister’s Office

“Today's decision by the ICC distorts international law and turns this institution into a political tool of anti-Israel propaganda. The ICC has no jurisdiction to deliberate the Palestinian case. The State of Israel is a robust democracy with an independent and effective legal system that is deeply respected all over the world. The judges’ decision rewards Palestinian terrorism, as well as the refusal of the Palestinian Authority to return to direct negotiations with Israel, and will further polarize both sides. We call on all countries that value the international legal system, and object to its political exploitation, to respect the sovereign rights of states and to choose not to consent to the Court’s jurisdiction. The State of Israel will take every necessary measure to protect its citizens.”