



The UIA Institute for the Rule of Law

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## STATEMENT

Paris, 29 September 2025

### Support for the International Criminal Court

**In light of repeated threats against the International Criminal Court, UIA-IROL reaffirms its commitment to supporting this international court.**

UIA-IROL is particularly concerned about the multifaceted nature of these attacks, which are not limited to direct assaults through political acts such as Donald Trump's presidential decrees.

As a reminder, in his first weeks in office, President Trump took two unprecedented measures against the ICC. Immediately after taking office on 20 January 2025, he issued a presidential decree revoking the presidential decree adopted by President Biden in 2020 and revoking a previous decree by Donald Trump imposing targeted sanctions against the ICC. Secondly, on 6 February, he signed a new executive order – [EO 14203](#) – entitled "Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court". While the previous executive order focused on concerns related to the investigation of US personnel in Afghanistan, the new executive order is also motivated by the arrest warrants issued for B. Netanyahu and Y. Gallant.

In response, on 28 February 2025, UIA-IROL issued a [statement](#) expressing outrage and deep concern over this development, noting that it directly threatened the Court's independence, impartiality, and ability to fulfil its mission.

In addition to immediately designating Prosecutor Khan, EO 14203 directed the Secretary of State to make further designations within 60 days. On 5 June 2025, Marco Rubio made [new designations](#) concerning four ICC judges, two of whom had authorised the investigation into Afghanistan and two others who had approved the arrest warrants against B. Netanyahu and Y. Gallant.

As of 20 August 2025, [two other judges, as well as the ICC's Deputy Prosecutors](#), are also targeted by the aforementioned Executive Order 14203 for "having directly engaged in any effort by the ICC to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute a protected person without consent of that person's country of nationality".

**In parallel with these direct attacks**, UIA-IROL notes attempts to manipulate the proceedings before the Court by entities that have made direct and violent threats against the judicial institution, one of which in particular is using worrying methods to encourage sanctions against the Court<sup>1</sup>.

Finally, the statements made by certain States regarding the granting of immunity, even limited or conditional, to heads of State subject to arrest warrants issued by the Court, deal a serious blow to the institution's ability to defend its legitimacy and *raison d'être*, including in the eyes of the public and, in particular, the victims who are most directly affected by the Court's mandate. We note and support

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<sup>1</sup> See on this point the article by R. Atjovi, [Conflict of interest in the Situation Venezuela before the International Criminal Court](#), in [Medium](#).

the submissions<sup>2</sup> made before the Court by the African Bar Association and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, expressing serious concerns about the extent of the attacks against the Court, particularly those directed at its judges and members of the Office of the Prosecutor.

Today, it is essential for all States, international organisations and civil society, to protect and support all measures that serve to protect the independence of the Court. The fact that this unique court can try war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and crimes of aggression, in addition to national criminal courts, with complete impartiality and independence, is essential to preserving an international rule of law that does not operate with double standards. It is an essential tool for building lasting peace in the regions of the world covered by its mandate, but also beyond, at the global level.

We note the [statements by the President of the European Commission](#) emphasising the need to protect the Court from any interference.

**Together with [Belgium and Slovenia](#) in particular, we call on the European Union to go further and take immediate measures to protect the Court and the rule of law, notably by quickly amending the EU Blocking Statute to include Executive Order 14203 in its Annex.**

We recall that with this measure, the European Union intends to protect European companies from the consequences of sanctions imposed by third countries that the Union considers illegal. As confirmed by the Court of Justice of the European Union in its 2021 judgment<sup>3</sup>, the Blocking Statute exists to safeguard the Union's legal order and to counter measures that violate international law and compromise the EU's objectives. Whereas the ICC sanctions clearly fall within the objectives of upholding international law -- including the protection of human rights and the rule of law -- bringing EO 14203 within the scope of the regulation is both necessary and urgent. Such an amendment would provide legal certainty to EU operators, safeguard cooperation with the Court, and send a strong political signal that the Union and its Member States (particularly the Netherlands as host State) stand firmly behind the independence of the ICC. We join the voices calling for the use of this mechanism in defence of the ICC's mandate.

**Member States, for their part, must firmly strengthen their diplomatic action to protect the ICC before the Court's credibility and effectiveness are irreparably damaged.**

**Finally, we express our solidarity and support for all professionals who work at the Court or assist its work on the ground**, and we commend the determination shown by the Court and its organs in their commitment to fully pursue the Court's mandate, including through field investigations, despite the attacks it is facing.

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#### **More about UIA-IROL**

*The Institute for the Rule of Law of the Union Internationale des Avocats (UIA-IROL) promotes the Rule of Law and supports and defends, in particular, (1) lawyers, judges and human rights defenders who are harassed, threatened and/or persecuted in the exercise of their professions, (2) the independence of the legal and judicial professions, and (3) the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, especially in defense of human rights.*

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/RelatedRecords/0902ebd180c6e5e6.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Bank Melli Iran v. Telekom Deutschland GmbH (Case C-124/20) Judgment (21 December 2021) <https://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?text=&docid=251507&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=574404>