مرکز حقوق کیفری بین المللی ایران
Iranian Center for
International Criminal Law
ICICL

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# International Criminal Justice at a Crossroads

Independence, Impartiality and Equal Accountability

The Hague, 30 November – 7 December 2026

The Iranian Centre for International Criminal Law reaffirms its commitment to an independent, impartial and effective International Criminal Court (ICC). At a time of unprecedented political pressure and growing challenges to international justice, the Court's future depends upon defending its independence, ensuring equal accountability and maintaining the confidence and cooperation of States.

## 1. Rejecting US Sanctions and Unilateralism

The Centre strongly condemns the escalating unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States against the ICC, its judges, prosecutors and personnel, including the unprecedented measures targeting the Court itself. Such actions, to which the United States has become addicted, undermine judicial independence and threaten the international rule of law. We call upon the European Union and all States Parties to take concrete legal, diplomatic and financial measures to protect the Court and ensure its effective functioning.

## 2. Accountability for International Crimes in Palestine

The Centre firmly supports the continuation of investigations and judicial proceedings concerning alleged international crimes committed in Palestine, including those involving Israeli political and military leaders. The arrest warrants issued against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant must not be undermined by political pressure. States Parties should fulfil their legal obligations to cooperate with the Court. Justice must never become subordinate to political alliances or the interests of powerful States.

**3. Equal Jurisdiction over the Crime of Aggression**

The Centre strongly supports civil society initiatives seeking to harmonise the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression with its jurisdiction over other core international crimes. The existing jurisdictional restrictions create unacceptable accountability gaps.

As an organisation representing perspectives from Iran, whose population has suffered the consequences of aggressive attacks by Israel and the United States, we regard this reform as particularly urgent. The Centre stands ready to cooperate with NGOs and States advocating equal and effective jurisdiction over aggression to eliminate any safe haven for aggressors across the world, whether in the East or the West.

**4. Encouraging Iran to Accept ICC Jurisdiction**

The Centre calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to consider an ad hoc declaration under Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute, accepting the Court's jurisdiction over alleged international crimes committed in connection with the recent unlawful use of force against Iran by the aggressive coalition of the United States and Israel. Such a step, without requiring full membership, could advance accountability and protect victims' rights, while allowing impartial scrutiny of all relevant conduct within the Court's jurisdiction.

**5. Safeguarding the Court's Legitimacy**

The ICC must demonstrate impartiality, consistency and independence in both its judicial decisions and institutional practices. Selective justice, political influence and avoidable institutional overreach risk undermining its legitimacy and the willingness of States to cooperate.

International criminal justice can survive and flourish only when law prevails over power, accountability is pursued without discrimination, and judicial independence is balanced with institutional responsibility.

**Iranian Centre for International Criminal Law**

**www.icicl.org**

**info@icicl.org**