



STATEMENT BY THE KENYAN SECTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS AT THE 24TH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE ICC

Honourable Participants and Observers,

I take this opportunity to thank the assembly for taking time to allow Organisations to contribute to the debate on the various issues up for deliberations.

As you deliberate on the issues, it is important to reaffirm the foundational principle of the Rome Statute: the absolute independence and impartiality of the International Criminal Court. The Court can fulfill its mandate only when it is free from political pressure, selective interference, or actions that undermine its credibility and effectiveness.

We remind all States Parties and the broader international community that safeguarding the ICC's independence is not only a legal obligation but a moral imperative central to the global fight against impunity. Any effort to weaken, politicize, or otherwise jeopardize the Court's work ultimately harms victims and erodes the integrity of international justice. Protecting the ICC's independence must remain a collective priority.

As jurists, we are deeply concerned by the recent imposition of sanctions by the United States of America on elected officials of the Court as well as individuals and organizations cooperating with the Court. These measures, which directly undermine the independence and integrity of the ICC, are unacceptable. They target individuals who are fulfilling their mandates in full conformity with the Rome Statute the very foundation of international criminal justice.

Equally troubling are the reports of a sophisticated cyber-attack seeking to infiltrate and disrupt the Court's operations. Such acts not only threaten the Court's institutional security but also seek to intimidate those who pursue justice on behalf of victims of the world's most serious crimes.

We are equally gravely concerned by the worsening atrocities and humanitarian suffering in Sudan, where civilians continue to endure widespread and systematic violence. These serious crimes require urgent and resolute action. We call on the ICC to accelerate its investigative and prosecutorial efforts regarding the situation in Sudan and to focus on ensuring accountability for those most responsible. We also urge States Parties especially governments in the region to fully cooperate with the Court, facilitate unhindered access, and support all necessary measures to secure justice for victims who have already waited far too long.

We further draw the Assembly's attention to the concerning reports from Tanzania regarding the human rights situation before, during, and after the recent electoral period. Civil society organisations and independent observers have documented allegations of excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, and incidents resulting in the killing of civilians. We respectfully urge the International Criminal Court to closely monitor the situation and, where the legal thresholds under the Rome Statute appear to be met, to consider preliminary assessments into these allegations. We also call on the Court to engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that any serious violations do not go unaddressed, and that accountability mechanisms are available to victims whose rights may have been gravely infringed.

As the Assembly gathers in this session, we echo the call for States Parties to reaffirm their political, diplomatic, and practical support for the ICC. Now more than ever, it is vital that States collectively defend the Court from external interference and ensure that its officials can carry out their duties free from threats, pressure, or reprisals.

The Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists commends the International Criminal Court and its officials for their steadfast commitment to justice and accountability in the face of unprecedented challenges during the intersessional period.

We urge the Assembly to adopt concrete measures that:

- Condemn and counter acts of intimidation or coercion against Court officials and those cooperating with the ICC;
- Enhance cybersecurity and institutional resilience, ensuring the Court's operations remain secure and uninterrupted;
- Reaffirm the collective commitment to the independence of the Court and the universality of the Rome Statute; and
- States Parties especially those in the Africa region should strengthen and demonstrate full cooperation with the ICC in relation to the situation in Sudan.

In closing, The Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists stands in full solidarity with the Court, its officials, and all who contribute to its work. We remain guided by the shared vision of a world where justice is not selective, and accountability is not optional.

I Thank you!