

# Statement of ICC President Judge Tomoko Akane following the issuance of US Executive Order seeking to impose sanctions on the International Criminal Court

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I note with deep regret the issuance by the United States of an Executive Order seeking to impose sanctions on the officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC, Court), harm the Court's independence and its impartiality and deprive millions of innocent victims of atrocities of justice and hope.

The ICC is a judicial body which performs functions that align with the interests of the international community by enforcing and promoting universally recognised rules of international law, including the law of armed conflicts and human rights law.

As atrocities continue to plague the globe affecting the lives of millions of innocent children, women and men, the Court has become indispensable. It represents the most significant legacy of the immense suffering inflicted on civilians by the world wars, the Holocaust, genocides, violence and persecutions. When most of the States of the world gathered to draft the Rome Statute, they made the dream of many women and men come true. Today, the ICC is dealing with proceedings arising from different Situations across the world, in strict adherence to the provisions of the Rome Statute.

The announced Executive Order is only the latest in a series of unprecedented and escalatory attacks aiming to undermine the Court's ability to administer justice in all Situations. Such threats and coercive measures constitute serious attacks against the Court's States Parties, the rule of law based international order and millions of victims.

The ICC and its officials from all over the world realise daily its judicial mandate to determine whether certain individual conducts, within its legitimate jurisdiction, give rise to responsibility for international crimes. We firmly reject any attempt to influence the independence and the impartiality of the Court or to politicise our judicial function. We have and always will comply only with the law, under all circumstances.

The ICC stands firmly by its personnel and pledges to continue providing justice and hope to millions of innocent victims of atrocities across the world, in all Situations before it, in the sole interest of human dignity. I call upon all those who share the values enshrined in the Statute to stand united in the Court's defence: our 125 States Parties, civil society and all nations of the world.

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