

Support the ICC as a Vital Court of Last Resort for Victims of Grave International Crimes

As of July 17, 2026, more than 100 organizations and individuals have joined the below statement. Additional signatories will be added on a rolling basis.

As US organizations from across civil society—including legal, human rights, faith-based, humanitarian, academic, and democracy organizations—alongside advocates for victims and survivors of atrocity crimes, prominent scholars, legal practitioners, diplomats, and civil servants, we are alarmed by the US administration’s announced campaign to “dismantle” and “systematically disable” the International Criminal Court (ICC), including reported threats of consequences for states that continue to support or cooperate with the Court.

As the country commemorates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we are reminded that the American experiment rests on an enduring principle: that no one is above the law. An independent judiciary, the rule of law, and equal justice under law are values the United States has long championed both at home and abroad.

The United States played a defining role in the early development of international criminal justice. US Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson and Nuremberg prosecutor Benjamin B. Ferencz, a lifelong champion of international justice, including the ICC, and the promise of “Never Again,” promoted the enduring principle that the gravest crimes must be met with accountability under the law. That commitment continued through US support on a bipartisan basis for accountability efforts before dedicated courts set up to address grave crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone. And it continued to support the work of the ICC in countries including Sudan and Ukraine.

The ICC is an independent and impartial judicial institution created by states to investigate and prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression, consistent with the principle that such crimes should not go unpunished. These are the only crimes within its jurisdiction. As a court of last resort, it reinforces—rather than replaces—the primary responsibility of states to investigate and prosecute these crimes. Efforts to intimidate, weaken, or dismantle the Court undermine confidence in the administration of justice and the international legal system itself. Most critically, they break a promise to victims and survivors that justice can prevail over impunity for crimes that shock the conscience of humanity and that no one is above the law.

We are concerned by any effort to pressure states for honoring the international legal commitments they have undertaken. The ICC has jurisdiction when a citizen of a non-state party commits crimes within its mandate on the territory of an ICC state party. US citizens who commit crimes abroad are subject to the jurisdiction of foreign courts. This is a well-established principle of international law.

We also express our solidarity with the judges, legal professionals, civil society organizations, and others who serve the cause of international justice with professionalism, independence, and fidelity to the law.

We urge the administration to withdraw this policy; refrain from actions that undermine the independence and functioning of the International Criminal Court or seek to discourage lawful cooperation with it; and reaffirm the longstanding commitment of the United States to justice, accountability, and the rule of law. July 17, International Justice Day, marks the adoption of the Rome Statute of the ICC. We reaffirm our commitment to accountability for atrocity crimes, to judicial independence, and the rule of law. We urge the US government to uphold that legacy.

SIGNATORIES (as of July 17, 2026)

Organizational Signatories

Advocacy Network for Justice and Peace (ANJP)
The Alliance for Diplomacy and Justice
American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
American Jewish World Service
Americans for Democratic Action
Amnesty International USA
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Development of International Law
Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)
Center for International Policy
Center for Justice and Accountability
Center for Truth and Justice (CFTJ)
Charity & Security Network
Citizens for Global Solutions-Education Fund
The Cora di Brazzà Foundation
cylindr magazine
Defending Rights & Dissent
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
Ensaaf
Friends Committee on National Legislation
The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security
Global Justice Center
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
Human Security Project
ImPact Coalition on Strengthening International Judicial Institutions
Indigenous Environmental Network
International Action Network for Gender Equity & Law (IANGEL)
International Criminal Court Alliance
Latin American Working Group (LAWG)
The Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP)
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
New Lines Institute
NH Peace Action Education Fund
Peace Action

Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
The Reckoning Project
StoptheDrugWar.org
Syria Justice and Accountability Centre
United Church of Christ
United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia
Western States Legal Foundation
Whitestone Legal Advocacy
World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy
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