

**Statement of the United States at the 22nd Session of the Assembly of States  
Parties of the International Criminal Court**

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Madame President, esteemed colleagues,

I am honored to address you on behalf of the United States Observer Delegation.

I first want to congratulate all those who have been elected to important positions and to thank those transitioning to new endeavors for their service to the Court. Congratulations also to Armenia for taking steps to become the newest State Party to the Rome Statute.

On that note, we acknowledge the many contributions of ASP member states here present and many of you personally. We know that without your work, this institution could not carry out its essential mandate. This includes your investment of countless hours devoted to governance and the review process, your concrete cooperation in many areas of the Court's work, and your efforts to ensure steady funding. States' investments in the Court evince a faith in the institution—and the role of criminal accountability—in addressing conflicts around the world and delivering justice to victims of the worst crimes known to humankind.

I also want to commend the Court for its achievements over the past year. The Court continues to demonstrate that it is an essential component of the ecosystem of international justice. This past year, we welcomed: progress in the *Ongwen* and *Al Hassan* cases; the Court's reauthorization of the investigation in Venezuela; and the Court's arrest warrants against Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova for acts that constitute grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

We are also pleased to see the ICC's meaningful progress in the first trial following a Security Council referral, in the case against a former *Janjaweed* commander.

We concur with the Prosecutor’s conclusion that the ongoing situation in Darfur is a product of years of impunity, and we welcomed the Prosecutor’s announcement that his office has commenced focused investigations on recent events. Indeed, just yesterday, U.S. Secretary of State Blinken released his determination that members of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) have committed war crimes in Sudan and that the RSF and allied militias have committed crimes against humanity and are responsible for ethnic cleansing in Darfur. The atrocities occurring today in Darfur are an ominous reminder of the prior genocide, in that they involve so many of the same perpetrators, the same communities being targeted, and the same patterns of criminality.

Like so many of you here, we are dismayed by the violence elsewhere, including in Ukraine, in Syria, and now in Israel and Gaza. In addition, around the world, entire communities are oppressed because of their identity or their faith—as in Xinjiang or Myanmar—or because they seek to express a disfavored political opinion—as in Venezuela or Belarus.

We are doing what we can in many of these situations to ensure good faith efforts towards a just and lasting peace, respond to the dire humanitarian situation on the ground, ensure robust and accurate documentation of what is happening and who is responsible, encourage the warring parties to faithfully adhere to their legal obligations, and forge pathways to justice. We know that responding meaningfully to demands for justice is not only an important objective in its own right, but is a core element for a sustainable peace—a recognition embodied in the Rome Statute itself.

Last year, I described our progress implementing President Biden’s “reset” of the U.S. relationship with the ICC. Since then, we have worked to put this relationship on a sustainable path. For example, we are providing practical assistance to the OTP across a range of its investigations. We are helping the Court track fugitives across several situations, including through offering rewards for their arrest. With others, we are providing input and commentary on the OTP’s policy papers. We are convening meetings with experts from the U.S. government, the private sector, the Court, and other accountability mechanisms to identify practical solutions to some of the most difficult challenges facing international justice

actors, including with respect to witness protection, insider witnesses, and cybersecurity. Finally, we have been pleased to help facilitate engagements between Washington and The Hague. This includes visits to the Court by bipartisan members of Congress and their staff and Attorney-General Merrick Garland—the first by a member of the U.S. cabinet. These interactions have helped to foster a greater understanding of the ICC in the United States and are building connections across the various branches of government with the Court.

In addition, and in line with the principle of complementarity, the United States is pursuing a broad range of initiatives to strengthen the objectives of the Rome Statute system and support accountability for atrocity crimes globally. To these ends, we are funding robust documentation by civil society organizations; catalyzing strategic litigation in courts around the world; investing in the physical, psychological, social, and financial rehabilitation of victims and survivors, as an expression of solidarity but also as a legal imperative; and, looking for ways to track, constrain, and ultimately bring into custody perpetrators, including using our rewards program and our sanctions authorities.

We have also updated our own laws to close the impunity gap for accused war criminals. Just yesterday, our Department of Justice announced the first indictments under our War Crimes Act against four Russia-affiliated military personnel for war crimes against a U.S. citizen in Ukraine.

Another essential component of these efforts is being self-critical. We cannot advance justice abroad if we do not confront injustice at home. We know that, and we take very seriously allegations of misconduct by U.S. personnel, but also legacies of harm to communities of color and others in our own country. As Vice President Harris has noted “we know our work at home will make us stronger for the world.”

Esteemed colleagues, in conclusion, the United States pledges to enhance our efforts on all these fronts, including through robust engagement and cooperation with the ICC and with friends of the Court—parties and non-party states alike. We know that our efforts are all the more powerful by standing with all of you, the community of states committed to global justice.

Thank you.