



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK**

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NEW YORK, 2 DECEMBER 2024

ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE ICC

**GENERAL DEBATE**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. CHRISTIAN WENAWESER**

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Madam President,

The past year has underscored, often in tragic ways, the growing importance of the ICC and its indispensable role in delivering justice to victims of the gravest crimes. The three major conflicts in the world today: the situations in Sudan, Gaza and Ukraine are all active investigations by the ICC. In all three investigations, the very highest present or former leadership has had ICC arrest warrants issued against them. The ICC has the task to hold individuals accountable for the most serious crimes – which inevitably are often persons in positions of power. And here, we recall in this context that article 27 of the Rome Statute applies to all persons who have committed Rome Statute crimes under the ICC's jurisdiction, without exception. This means that the ICC is inherently at risk of political attacks against it. And even though the Court is looking back at a long history of such political attacks: there has never been a more important moment to stand up in support of the ICC, to protect and to proactively mitigate risk than now.

As we meet, the court finds itself under sustained attack. Cyberattacks have disrupted its

operations, causing significant financial and operational challenges. More disturbingly even, some non-States Parties have imposed unprecedented retaliatory measures on senior ICC officials for fulfilling their mandates under the Rome Statute, while others are threatening sanctions against the institution.

These attacks strike at the heart of judicial and prosecutorial independence, a principle foundational to any system of justice—domestic or international. We, as States Parties, have a duty to respond, defending the ICC from these actions and threats and demonstrating our unwavering support. This is not only about protecting one institution but about standing firm for the rule of law at the international level – a principle that is key, particularly for small and medium size States, to ensure their protection in an increasingly difficult geopolitical environment.

Madam President,

In this regard, it is equally vital that we provide the ICC with the resources it needs to carry out its mandate effectively and independently. And, on the Court's side, for it to improve its work culture and use of resources. The continued crises around the world from Myanmar to Libya underscore the growing demand for the ICC's work. Our support must translate into actions, particularly through an adequate budget. Only then can we ensure the ICC's effectiveness, credibility, and independence. Our statements of support for the Court are only credible if backed up by concrete actions.

We must use this as an opportunity to build stronger consensus among ourselves as States Parties and with the wider UN membership. A truly global ICC requires active and inclusive engagement from all of us. This includes not only broadening the geographic scope of the Court's activities but also ensuring universal participation in its principles and practices. We must redouble our work towards universality of the Rome Statute including the ratification of its amendments, in particular the Kampala amendments on the crime of aggression. There is no bigger sign of the

ICC's continued success than new States joining the Rome Statute system. Two States have joined in the last year alone: Armenia and Ukraine. In this regard, we look forward to Ukraine soon officially becoming the 125th ICC State Party, a step of utmost importance – for the Court and for accountability efforts in Ukraine. Moreover, because the situation in Ukraine was a wakeup call for the imperative to deter aggression everywhere in order to protect international peace and security, we have to urgently review the limitations on the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression. We are working with like-minded States on how best to address this accountability gap in the Rome Statute. And we look forward to working with all of you to realize the harmonization of the Rome Statute's jurisdiction over all four of its core crimes at the Special Session of the ASP next July.

Madam President,

Let me quote the UN Secretary General Guterres in his speech at this year's opening session of the General Assembly: "Let's move our world towards less impunity and more accountability." Indeed, if we are serious about defending and standing up for international law accountability is crucial. There is no better way to promote accountability than by giving the ICC the political, diplomatic, and financial support it needs, by rallying around the ICC's global mandate and by avoiding perceptions of double standards. Challenges in my own region, Europe, are no more and no less important than those elsewhere. We must therefore empower the ICC and international law more broadly to meet the moment. Indeed, if we act even handedly and consistently, the rule of law will come out stronger at the other end.

The ICC stands on the right side of history. It is a cornerstone of the international legal order we strive to preserve against forces seeking to undermine the rule of law. Cyberattacks, sanctions, and political coercion must not deter us from our shared vision of a world where justice prevails over impunity and where everybody is held accountable for their actions and nobody is above the law. I thank you.