

02/12/2025

ORAL INTERVENTION

GENERAL DEBATE – TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES
PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE (ASP24)

2 December 2025, The Hague

Presented by Libya Crimes Watch

In partnership with:

- Lawyers for Justice in Libya
- Partners from Libyan civil society

Ladies and gentlemen,

I speak to you today on behalf of Libya Crimes Watch, Lawyers for Justice in Libya, and our partners from Libyan civil society, and above all, to convey the voices of victims and affected communities in Libya.

Through our work in monitoring and documentation, we see every day how the same patterns of international crimes continue unabated, year after year. We face a heavy catalogue of violations, including arbitrary arrest, torture, enforced disappearance, extrajudicial killing, and the targeting of civil society. These violations are committed by security and military actors affiliated with de facto authorities in eastern Libya and the Government of National Unity in the west, to the point that impunity has become the rule rather than the exception.

For example, since 2024, we at LCW have documented more than 60 incidents of extrajudicial killing, including cases involving children, resulting from torture, medical neglect, and indiscriminate shelling. And in May, 12 civilians were killed during clashes in Tripoli due to the use of heavy weapons in densely populated neighbourhoods.

More than 70 civilians, including at least ten women, also remain forcibly disappeared since November 2024, following a widespread arrest campaign in eastern Libya over accusations related to witchcraft and sorcery.

Serious violations amounting to international crimes continue inside both official and unofficial prisons in east and west alike—particularly in Qarnada, Al-Kuweifiya, and Mitiga prisons—where civilians, including activists and human rights defenders, are held for years without trial.

As for migrants, they face extremely harsh and inhumane conditions. They are subjected to systematic incitement and hate campaigns encouraged by the authorities, as well as mass

arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, human trafficking, violence, and sexual assault. Security bodies and armed groups have turned this file into a source of profit, detaining migrants and extorting their families for ransom in exchange for their release.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Amid this bleak reality, the Court's work in recent months has been a genuine source of hope. The issuance of new arrest warrants and the arrest of the accused, Khaled Al-Haishri, have restored some measure of confidence for victims. But this hope remains fragile unless further steps towards accountability are taken. To this day, despite the Libyan authorities' declaration of accepting the Court's jurisdiction under Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute, and despite Libya's existing obligations under Security Council Resolution 1970, authorities in both east and west Libya have not surrendered a single individual wanted by the Court, including Osama Njeem and Saif Sneidel. This reflects an apparent absence of genuine cooperation and shows that the steps taken so far have not gone beyond symbolic measures.

At the same time, the Libyan judicial system remains unable and unwilling to hold those responsible for international crimes to account. It lacks independence, as well as the laws, procedures, and fundamental safeguards necessary for justice, rendering the application of the principle of complementarity unrealistic and unattainable in practice. As a result, victims are left with no avenue for redress other than the International Criminal Court.

In light of these realities, we at LCW put forward the following key recommendations:

- We call on States Parties and the Court to use all available pressure to ensure that the Libyan authorities translate their acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction into genuine cooperation that guarantees the surrender of all individuals sought by the Court, without exception.
- We urge the Office of the Prosecutor to continue its investigations without being bound to rigid timelines, and we further urge the Court to issue additional arrest warrants against high-level officials implicated in the international crimes committed in Libya.
- We recommend that the Court reconsider how the principle of complementarity is applied in the Libyan context, given the absence of political will, the lack of independence, and the structural deficiencies of the Libyan judiciary, which render national justice pathways currently unenforceable.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Victims and affected communities in Libya have nothing to hold on to except the hope represented by this Court. Every step taken here has a direct impact on how close they are to achieving the justice they have waited so many years for.

Thank you.