

**STAFF UNION COUNCIL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**



**SPEAKING NOTES
ASP24 – General Debate**

The Hague, 2 December 2025

Excellencies, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Bureau and Presidency of the ASP for giving the Staff Union Council the opportunity to present our views today. We think that the views of the Council, that represents more than 1000 staff members here at the Headquarters and the country offices, are pertinent to the discussion today.

Already at the last ASP, speaking in the context of the Review Mechanism session, we urged the States Parties to protect the staff of the Court, many of whom are your nationals, from the external threat of sanctions, so that they can focus and deliver on the mandate of the Court. We acknowledge that throughout the year the States Parties have made significant diplomatic and other efforts to counter the US sanctions, and we fully appreciate it. We would like to also thank you for the messages of support during the recent UN General Assembly session and in the past two days at this assembly session.

As you know, this past year has been extremely challenging in terms of the external threat of sanctions. Today, with nine elected officials sanctioned, and with the risk of further escalation by the US administration, staff members are bearing significant consequences and are anxious more than ever.

If institutional sanctions are imposed on the Court, it will have severe impact on all staff. For the US nationals, this would mean facing a huge risk of being criminally prosecuted and fined up to hundreds of thousands of US dollars. The non-US nationals can themselves be personally sanctioned, if they continue supporting the Court, and consequently be blacklisted by the US administration by freezing of their assets with nexus to US dollar, and travel ban to the US for themselves and their families. As we have seen from the experiences of our elected officials, this can impact everything from the ability to use a bank card to using digital services from Airbnb, PayPal and other US companies. And this risk extends beyond the staff to our families, especially for family members with US nationals or with family members living in the US. Over-compliance with US sanctions by non-US companies and banks can also add extra challenges for staff members, such as refusing financial transactions.

We acknowledge that the Court, in particular the Registrar, is doing whatever feasible, to have alternative arrangements in place in terms of IT systems, banking and health insurance. The Court is also implementing mitigating measures to minimise the impact of sanctions to staff and the Court. But the Court alone cannot achieve full protection, and we turn to you, the states parties, and the governing body of the Court to shield us from threat of sanctions, and to let us continue working to deliver the mandate.

We call on States parties to urgently implement the following recommendations:

1. **Blocking statutes:** Activate EU and national blocking statutes of the States Parties to shield the Court and its personnel from the coercive measures and its impact. In addition, States parties should engage with and provide guarantees to the commercial companies in their territories encouraging them to continue interacting with the Court, in case of institutional sanctions.
2. **Litigation strategies:** We ask the states parties to devise litigation strategies before the US, EU and national Courts, and/or any other entity to judicially challenge the sanctions on behalf of the Court.
3. **Alternative arrangements:** The Court should be provided with sufficient support so that transitional arrangements are continued to be put in place for the Court to continue daily functioning, including banking, IT systems, and any other transactions with commercial entities.

We, as Staff Union Council, understand that the fact we are facing these sanctions shows the importance of our work. We consider it an honour and a privilege to contribute to the mandate of the Court and we stand resolved in our commitment despite these pressures.

I thank you for your attention.