



**Peter Lewis**

**Registrar of the International Criminal Court**

**Presentation of the Proposed Programme Budget for 2021**

**19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of States Parties**

*The Hague*

*15 December 2020*

Your Excellency, President of the Assembly of States Parties,  
Your Excellencies, Vice Presidents of the Assembly of States Parties,  
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,  
Mr President,  
Madam Prosecutor,

It is a great honour to present the Court's proposed programme budget for 2021 to the nineteenth session of the Assembly of States Parties.

In devising the budget proposal for next year, and given the projected global economic challenges, internal discussions within the Court on the budget levels were driven by a recognition of the unprecedented and difficult times faced by the international community, while striking a balance with the continued need to reassert the purpose of the Rome Statute and the significance of the mandate of the Court.

In this regard, the Court decided to demonstrate sensitivity to the continuing pressures on States Parties' finances in 2021 by presenting the leanest possible budget proposal. A budget that demonstrates awareness of the serious difficulties faced by States around the world, without compromising essential operations of the Court and its ability to fulfil its momentous mandate.

In general terms, we now, more than ever, need to keep our existing capabilities for the future, the capabilities that States have invested in over the years, and that have allowed us to show resilience in the face of new challenges. We do not want to survive this crisis and find ourselves that we have no capability to fulfil our mandate.

In doing so, the Court looked into containing the impact of the contractual increases as per the application of the UN Common System, and in addition the new

requirements for the judicial activities in relation to the two trials and one new case at Pre-Trial, which were not included for 2020.

This means that maintaining the same level of resources as approved in 2020 means a serious reduction in our capabilities for 2021.

We rigorously considered these matters internally, always driven by a joint commitment from every sector of the Court to produce a sensible budget proposal.

The new reality in which the world exists today is also an opportunity for us to evaluate the suitability of our structures and working methods to the new environment.

Faced with difficult decisions in the way forward, the Court looked at its strategic plans for guidance on how to prioritise and focus its budgetary allocations in 2021 ensuring its organisational resilience.

Accordingly, some of the measures we implemented in preparing our budget aim at introducing models and methodology that will ensure resilience by identifying areas where more flexibility and scalability can be introduced.

Signs of this approach will begin to be seen in the 2021 proposed budget as we take some decisions going into next year with policy implications and setting targets that will allow for opportunities to re-evaluate some of our model and processes.

Let me now turn to the proposed programme budget for 2021.

The Court proposed a programme budget for 2021 of **€148.5 million**. This represented a reduction of **€0.7 million** or minus **0.5 per cent**, against the 2020 approved budget, excluding the Host State loan.

In presenting a budget for 2021 at a level comparable to that of the approved budget for 2020, the Court has identified various measures to achieve reductions and savings in order to contain the impact of the contractual increases of approximately **€6.4 million** resulting from the application of the United Nations Common System, as well as the impact of new requirements for judicial activities in relation to two trial proceedings and one new case at the pre-trial stage, which were not budgeted for in 2020, of approximately **€2 million**.

This is in line with the Assembly resolution requesting the Court to “**present a sustainable budget proposal for its 2021 programme budget, based on transparent and strict financial assessments and needs-analysis. Proposed increases above the level of the 2020 approved budget should be requested only when necessary for the purpose of mandated activities and after all possible steps have been taken to finance such increases through savings and efficiencies**”.

In other words, faced with unavoidable increases, the Court made every effort to first offset those increases through savings, efficiencies and reductions elsewhere, with a view to avoiding presenting the leanest possible budget, and in this case, within the same level as that approved for 2020.

The Committee on Budget and Finance reviewed the Court’s proposal, and recommended further reductions in the amount of **€243.3 thousand**, this amounts to a total decrease of **€946.6 thousand** for the entire Court or approximately **minus 0.7 per cent** against the 2020 approved budget.

I would like to thank the **Committee on Budget and Finance and its Chair, Ms Mónica Sánchez**, for the important role that they played this year, in this particularly challenging circumstances. The Committee's close scrutiny of the budget proposal, its constructive engagement with the Court and the valuable expertise and guidance provided to both States and the Court, has proven to be once again essential for the development of trustworthy budget proposal and to guide your consideration thereof.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates,

I would like to express my gratitude to the facilitator for the budget, **Ambassador Andrés Terán**, of Ecuador, for the very productive co-operation during budget discussions, held under his skilful leadership and guidance.

As always, the Court stands ready to provide further information in order to assist this honourable Assembly in discharging its functions, in the spirit of open, transparent and candid dialogue.

Thank you.