

UK remarks by Foreign and Development Secretary, Dominic Raab for ICC Assembly of States Parties, 14-16 December 2020 (approx. 4mins)

Back in 2003 to 2006, I was posted to The Hague as a young Foreign Office lawyer.

And during that time, I had the privilege of working on ICC cases relating to the Lord's Resistance Army, Darfur and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I also had the opportunity to attend meetings of the ICC's Assembly of States Parties.

So I know first hand of the dedication of ICC staff, the impact the ICC has, and also its iconic symbolism as a force for good in the world.

The UK has always been, and remains, absolutely committed to promoting international criminal justice and the rule of law in our international relations and including through the ICC.

The UK was a founder member of the ICC, and we strongly support its aims and objectives.

The UK strongly believes that to maintain and reinforce the Court's vital role we must also continue to deliver on reform.

We see the need to focus on strengthening the Court in three areas:

First, its effectiveness and its impact.

We want to see the Court maintaining the very highest legal standards, and conducting efficient, timely and effective investigations and prosecutions.

Secondly, we think that following the Court's statute, we need to see a clearer and more consistent approach to the application of the complementarity principle.

According to its mandate, the ICC should only step in where national authorities are genuinely unable or unwilling to investigate or prosecute.

And third, on governance and efficiency.

The Court needs to take a more rigorous approach to ensuring financial discipline, rigorously prioritising and being realistic about what it can achieve, particularly at this challenging time.

The UK was very pleased to support the Independent Expert Review at last year's Assembly.

And at this year's meeting I hope that States Parties will adopt a resolution to ensure that the Review's recommendations are taken forward quickly.

That is the best way to ensure that real reforms are achieved – and to ensure that we follow an inclusive,

State Party-driven process for implementing the measures needed to strengthen the Court.

Our commitment runs deep.

And I believe this is highlighted by the excellent candidate that we are putting forward for the ICC Judicial Election in Judge Joanna Korner.

I have known Judge Korner since she was a senior advocate at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

She is a formidable judge, she is exceptionally well qualified for this role, and her candidacy is part of the UK's enduring commitment to a process of strengthening the Court.

It is vital that we nominate and, then, elect the most highly qualified and experienced Judges for the credibility and efficiency of the ICC.

It is also vital to select the right Prosecutor, as this is critically important to the reform and future health of the Court.

So I urge the Assembly to select the candidate best able to lead and manage an efficient and highly effective prosecution team; delivering convictions, dispensing fair justice - which is what the world wants to see.

The UK strongly supports the steps the Assembly is taking to tackle the challenges facing the Court.

We are pleased that this work has started.

But I think we all appreciate that more effort is required on the part of this Assembly, all organs of the Court and its supporters to drive reform designed to reinforce its impact and its standing in the world.

If we work together, we can build a Court that is even more effective and more efficient. A Court that

delivers justice for victims and accountability for the most serious crimes. A Court that delivers its mandate with credibility and confidence.

Thank you.