

Kourula, Erkki (Finland)

[Original: English]

Statement of qualifications

Judge Erkki Kourula fully meets the requirements established in the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee on Nominations adopted by the Assembly of States Parties with resolution ICC-ASP/10/Res. 5.

He is a person of high moral character and served as judge of the Appeals Division of the International Criminal Court from 2003 to 2015. In addition, as a former civil servant at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, he held a public office for which section 125 of the Finnish Constitution requires irreproachable conduct.

Judge Kourula also has established competence and experience in both criminal and international law. He is a prominent international lawyer with both outstanding experience and profound knowledge of international law, including international humanitarian law and the law of human rights. He holds a PhD in international law from the University of Oxford and has been actively engaged in issues of public international law throughout his academic and diplomatic career.

Judge Kourula was actively involved in the negotiations on the Rome Statute from 1995 to 1998, as the lead negotiator of the Finnish delegations to the Ad Hoc Committee and to the Preparatory Committee as well as to the United Nations Diplomatic Conference in Rome on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court. In this context, he also held several international positions of trust, such as those of member in the enlarged Bureau and of Coordinator for jurisdictional issues.

In addition, as judge of the ICC, Judge Kourula gained practical experience of the work of the Court and insight into the qualifications set for candidates for judicial positions at the Court. During his first term from 2003 to 2006, he also took part in the preparation of the Regulations of the Court as Chairperson of the judges' drafting and working group. During the same period, he was a member of several working groups within the Court contributing substantially to various issues, for instance in the framework of the Code of Judicial Ethics. Further, he served as the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Legal Texts. After his re-election to the Court in 2006, Judge Kourula continued to serve in the Appeals Division and participated in the deliberations of close to 300 decisions, including as the presiding judge for several decisions in the Lubanga, Ngudjolo Chui, Katanga, Al Bashir, Bemba, Mbarushimana and Gaddafi cases.

Before his election to the International Criminal Court, Judge Kourula served in various legal capacities in the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs between 1985 and 2003 and was appointed Director General of Legal Affairs in 2002. As Director General, he was member of the Finnish National Group in the Permanent Court of Arbitration. Before taking up the post of Director General for Legal Affairs, he served as Permanent Representative of Finland to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg (1998-2002), Deputy Director General for Legal Affairs (1995-1998), Minister Counsellor and Legal Adviser to the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations in New York (1991-1995), Director of the International Law Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1989-1991) and Counsellor and Legal Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1986-1989).

Judge Kourula is fluent in English and French. Of the other official languages of the Court, he understands Spanish and Russian. In addition to his mother tongue Finnish, he is fluent in Swedish and German.

Throughout his distinguished career, Judge Kourula has made an important contribution to academic discourse on current issues of criminal and international law. Judge Kourula's dedication to the International Criminal Court is without question.
