



Tweede Kamer

DER STATEN-GENERAAL

House of Representatives of
Netherlands' Parliament,
Committee on Foreign Affairs

Eliot L. Engel,
Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs,
U.S. House of Representatives,
2170 Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515

The Hague, October 22 2020

Dear Colleague,

I reach out to you on behalf of the standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in the matter of the sanctions announced by the United States administration on 2 September against two staff members of the International Criminal Court (ICC), including its chief prosecutor.

On Thursday September 15 the committee met with ms. Bensouda, the chief prosecutor of the ICC, in a formal meeting. Ms. Bensouda informed the committee on the effects of the sanctions on the ICC and exchanged views with the MP's on the role of the ICC.

The ICC plays an essential role in delivering justice to the victims of some of world's most horrific crimes. Its independence and impartiality are crucial characteristics of the Court's work, which are fundamental for the legitimacy of its judgements. The ICC stands for a multilateral legal order which we consider to be of the utmost importance. The ICC must be able to work independently and impartially, free from outside interference.

As the host country to the ICC we feel a special responsibility for the ability of the ICC to perform its mission. We consider the sanctions to be an unprecedented measure that attempt to obstruct the Court's investigations and judicial proceedings. The sanctions announced by the United States administration are therefore unacceptable. The United States should reconsider its position and reverse the measures it has taken. Impunity must never be an option.

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The Netherlands is unwavering in its support for the universality of the Rome Statute and for the ICC. We will resolutely defend it from any attempts aimed at obstructing the course of justice and undermining the international system of criminal justice.

We urge you to join us in the support of the ICC, and to exert all powers that you have to lift the sanctions.

Yours faithfully,
Ms. Pia Dijkstra,
Chair of the standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
House of Representatives,
The Hague,
The Netherlands.