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Coalition for the International Criminal Court calls on lawyers to apply for the position of the ICC Prosecutor

The Hague— The challenges confronting the International Criminal Court (ICC) require States Parties to select and appoint a Prosecutor that is highly qualified and experienced and that will resolutely pursue those suspected of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and the crime of aggression, said **the Coalition of the International Criminal Court (CICC)** today.

The ICC has [advertised](#) for the ICC Prosecutor post as Ms Fatou Bensouda prepares to step down in June 2021 when her nine-year terms ends.

“Lawyers with the requisite qualifications, skills-set, and experience, especially as a prosecutor, and who believe in the ICC’s mission should throw their hats in the ring,” said **Ricardo Izquierdo, Legal Officer at the CICC**.

“The wider the pool of candidates the more likely it is that States Parties to the Rome Statute will choose the most capable candidate,” said **Izquierdo**.

The new Prosecutor will greatly influence the ICC’s future direction and how well it weathers the brewing storm that is fed on the one hand by anti-ICC forces and on the other by those intent on undermining the very foundations of this important institution.

The US administration revoked Ms Bensouda’s US visa and threatened to impose financial and other sanctions on her and other ICC officials who dared to seek justice for women, children and other victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Afghanistan.

“This outrageous attack on Ms Bensouda, which was clearly intended to undermine the integrity and independence of the ICC, should be deplored by all,” said **Izquierdo**.

“Further, States Parties to the Rome Statute should take immediate concrete measures to protect the person and role performed by the current and future Prosecutors of the ICC,” **he continued**.

These challenges also underscore why it is crucial that the new Prosecutor’s conviction to investigate and prosecute without fear or favor all those suspected of committing serious crimes under international law should be beyond question.

The ICC is criticized, among other reasons, for having investigated, prosecuted and convicted a handful of suspects since 2002. Some of its decisions and jurisprudence have also drawn some flak.

States Parties to the Rome Statute have also been [criticized](#) – and rightly so - for failing to cooperate with the ICC with some notoriously ignoring requests to arrest suspects such as former President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir.

“These and other teething challenges being experienced by the world’s first permanent international criminal court are best addressed by having all countries, including the US, Russia, China and India joining the family of nations that refuse to provide safe haven for perpetrators of heinous crimes,” said **Izquierdo**.

The new Prosecutor, working together with the other ICC principals, will lead the process of consulting on and addressing these and other challenges being faced by the Court and the Rome Statute system.

“States Parties and the Court’s principals should only countenance and implement reforms that will strengthen the ICC’s effectiveness, independence, resilience and integrity and protect it from hostile geopolitical forces,” said **Izquierdo**.



But, to effectively discharge its anti-impunity mandate, the ICC is looking to members of the legal profession to put their names forward and be considered for this most important of roles.

“The process for the election of the next prosecutor should be maximally transparent and merit-based,” stated **Mariana Pena, Senior Legal Officer, Open Society Justice Initiative.**

“Qualified prosecutors from all regions who have expertise in transnational investigations and prosecutions, and sound management experience should consider applying,” **she continued.**

Background

The International Criminal Court (ICC) published on 2 August 2019 an [advert](#) for the ICC Prosecutor position with an application deadline for 31 October 2019. The new Prosecutor will be recruited on a nine-year fixed term contract. The current Prosecutor’s tenure started on 15 June 2012 and ends on 15 June 2021.

Coalition for the ICC continues to advocates for the selection and appointment of the [best qualified](#) and experienced individual to the position of Prosecutor as this will go a long way in protecting and strengthening this critically important institution.

About the ICC

The ICC is the world’s first permanent international court to have jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. It was established through the Rome Statute of the ICC, which came into effect on 1 July 2002. Central to the Court’s mandate is the principle of complementarity, which holds that the Court will only intervene if national legal systems are unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

There are currently eleven active investigations before the ICC: Burundi; the Central African Republic I & II; Democratic Republic of Congo; Darfur, Sudan; Kenya; Libya; Uganda; Côte d’Ivoire; Mali and Georgia. The ICC has publicly issued 34 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Three trials are ongoing. There have been three convictions and three acquittals. Ten preliminary examinations currently ongoing, including into situations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh/Myanmar, Colombia, Gabon, Guinea, Iraq/UK, Palestine, Nigeria, Ukraine, and Venezuela. The OTP has concluded preliminary examinations relating to Honduras, the Republic of Korea and the Comoros referral, declining in each case to open an investigation.

About us

The [Coalition for the International Criminal Court](#) is a global network of over 2500 civil society organizations in 150 countries campaigning for an effective, independent, resilient and standard-setting ICC and fighting for justice for victims of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and the crime of aggression through national courts and the ICC. It is housed in and is a program of the [World Federalist Movement – Institute for Global Policy](#) and is headquartered in The Hague, The Netherlands.