

Human Rights Watch statement to the Plenary on Cooperation

International Criminal Court Assembly of States Parties
Twentieth Session
December 8, 2021

Check against delivery

Many thanks for the opportunity to address this plenary on behalf of Human Rights Watch.

For as long as the ICC does its job, it will face politicized opposition. State party support, together with civil society and other international partners, is essential in the face of challenges.

The removal earlier this year of US sanctions demonstrates our collective strength when it comes to defending justice from political attack.

We look to states parties to draw lessons from that experience and to swift implementation of Independent Expert Review recommendation 169, aimed at ensuring strategic responses to future attacks.

We also look to this Assembly to devote dedicated time in its future agendas to the issue of non-cooperation.

We urge states parties to take every opportunity to bring about the arrest of individuals subject to ICC arrest warrants.

States parties should remind Libyan authorities of their obligations under a UN Security Council resolution to ensure the surrender of Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. Failure to act blocks access justice for the victims of serious crimes.

While there have been positive developments in the relationship between Sudan and the court, recent events there have created new challenges and underscore the importance of states parties leveraging all opportunities to call on authorities to respect their obligations and public commitments to cooperate with the court.

Without arrests there can be no justice. And without greater state party engagement, prospects for victims to see justice will remain limited.