Switzerland regrets sanctions against International Criminal Court

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Portal of the Swiss Government

<https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/documentation/media-releases.msg-id-79444.html>

Switzerland regrets the more severe measures that the USA decided on 11 June 2020 against the International Criminal Court (ICC). It reaffirms its support for the ICC as an independent institution that prosecutes the most serious crimes and thereby contributes to lasting peace and international stability.

Switzerland is concerned about the additional visa restrictions and new economic sanctions, which the United States has imposed on ICC employees, their families and natural and legal persons who support investigations against American citizens. Switzerland calls on the USA to revoke these comprehensive measures.

Criminal prosecution is an effective peacebuilding instrument

Switzerland supports the appeal made by the President of the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC on 11 June 2020 and is strongly committed to the principles and values enshrined in the Rome Statute. The ICC is a major achievement and an integral component of the rules-based international order. It is the result of decades-long efforts to punish those who commit the most serious crimes and to provide justice for the victims. This is a basic prerequisite for sustainable peacekeeping and, ultimately, international stability.

Prosecution is the responsibility of states

The International Criminal Court, based in The Hague, was established in 1998 and currently has 123 states parties, including Switzerland. The ICC conducts criminal investigations and proceedings against individuals accused of the most serious crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. The primary responsibility for prosecution lies with the national authorities. The ICC can only initiate investigations against individuals where national legal systems are unwilling or unable to genuinely carry out proceedings. Switzerland therefore calls on the United States to conduct a full investigation and prosecution of US personnel implicated in such crimes, as they stated again yesterday in Washington.