

CCBE calls for urgent European action to protect the International Criminal Court from the impact of sanctions

The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) has adopted a [statement](#) expressing its strong support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and warning that sanctions imposed by the United States of America against members of the Court pose a serious threat to the independence of international justice, the rule of law, and the European Union's strategic autonomy.

The CCBE underlines that the independence and impartiality of courts and tribunals are fundamental to the rule of law and to the proper administration of justice. In that context, it stresses that the ICC must be able to carry out its judicial functions free from political pressure, coercion, or interference.

The statement follows recent public statements by U.S. Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, announcing a coordinated U.S. Administration campaign against the ICC and outlining a wide range of measures under consideration, including diplomatic initiatives, visa restrictions and additional sanctions. The announcement represents the latest development in a broader campaign initiated with the adoption of Executive Order 14203, "Imposing Sanctions on the International Criminal Court", under which several ICC members have been subjected to restrictive measures.

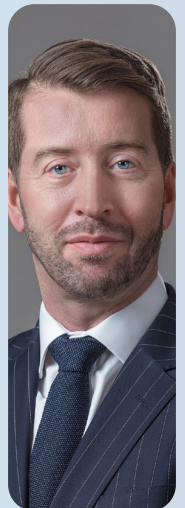
According to the CCBE, these sanctions have had far-reaching consequences, including restrictions affecting access to financial and digital services, and have created a climate of legal uncertainty for judges, lawyers and other legal professionals involved in the work of the Court.



The CCBE warns that sanctions targeting international judges for acts carried out in the exercise of their judicial functions undermine the independence of international justice and create a dangerous precedent. It also highlights the broader structural vulnerabilities exposed by the measures, in particular the European Union's dependence on non-European digital infrastructure and financial service providers.

CCBE President, Roman Završek, commented:

"Sanctions directed against judges and legal professionals involved in the work of the International Criminal Court strike at the heart of judicial independence and the rule of law. The ICC must be able to fulfil its mandate free from intimidation, interference or coercion. The European Union and its Member States must act decisively to protect the Court, support those who serve it, and defend the principles of international justice on which accountability for the gravest crimes depends."



The CCBE reiterates its full support for the ICC as a key institution of the international criminal justice system and an essential actor in the fight against impunity. It calls on European institutions and Member States to act without delay to defend the Court, protect legal professionals working within the international justice system, and uphold the values on which the European legal order is founded.

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The Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE) represents the Bars and Law Societies of 45 countries, and through them more than 1 million European lawyers. The CCBE speaks for the legal profession in Europe on a wide range of cross-border legal issues, including the rule of law, human rights, access to justice and the administration of justice.