

On the sidelines of the Assembly of States Parties to the International Criminal Court The ACIJLP discusses "The current position of Arab states regarding the International Criminal Court"



المركز العربي لاستقلال القضاء والمحاماة
THE ARAB CENTER FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF
THE JUDICIARY AND THE LEGAL PROFESSION
(ACIJLP)



مؤسسة دعم العدالة
JUSTICE SUPPORT FOUNDATION (JSF)

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The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJLP), in cooperation with **the Arab Coalition for the International Criminal Court**, held a seminar on the margins of the Assembly of States Parties convened in The Hague from December 1–6, 2025, entitled “The current position of Arab states regarding the International Criminal Court.” The seminar was attended by numerous representatives of International Criminal Court (ICC) member states, international and regional organizations, and members of the Secretariat of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court.

Nasser Amin, Director of the ACIJLP, reviewed the evolution of Arab states’ positions from the 1998 Rome Conference to the present day. He noted that the Arab stance has undergone significant shifts over almost 27 years, ranging from outright rejection and caution toward the very concept of the ICC to a limited rate of ratification of the Rome Statute, with only 13 Arab states having done so. This was followed by a further development marked by the ratification of the Statute by five Arab states (Jordan, Djibouti, Comoros, Tunisia, and Palestine), and subsequently by growing support from several countries in the region for the Court’s work and commendation of its recent decisions. However, no substantial progress has been made toward additional accessions to the Court.

The discussions addressed the threats facing the ICC, including the sanctions imposed on the Court, its judges and prosecutors, as well as on Palestinian civil society organizations involved in documenting crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces in Gaza. Participants stressed the impact of these sanctions on the Court’s role, noting that they constitute an obstruction of justice.

The history of the US administration's actions against the ICC was also reviewed, beginning with attacks on the very notion of the Court from the moment the Rome Statute was adopted in 1998. This included efforts to conclude bilateral agreements with certain states to prevent cooperation with the Court, as well as threatening legislation in 2003 authorizing a potential invasion of The Hague. The review highlighted that the current US targeting of the ICC is a continuation of a longstanding pattern of practices detrimental to international criminal justice. Participants called on the Assembly of States Parties to defend and protect the Court and to oppose these sanctions.

The ACIJLP's Director affirmed that Arab states have a moral and legal obligation toward the Court—namely, to support its work and defend it against US sanctions. He further called on Arab states to expedite their ratification of the Rome Statute and accede to the ICC.

Cairo, December 4, 2025