



**PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK**

---

NEW YORK, 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

ANNUAL MEETING: INFORMAL MINISTERIAL NETWORK FOR THE ICC  
**STATEMENT BY H.E. DOMINIQUE HASLER**  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

President Fernandez de Gurmendi,

Prosecutor Khan,

Many thanks for joining us this morning.

I am grateful for the strong participation in our annual exchange on the International Criminal Court at the political level – unfortunately in virtual format, but nevertheless of essential importance.

As you know, the ICC has been a foreign policy priority of Liechtenstein for many years – it is an integral part of our commitment to the rule of law, our belief in multilateralism and our engagement for human rights. While still a relatively young institution, the ICC is already looking back at a rich and diverse history and has successfully mastered many difficult moments. When this group last met a year ago, sanctions measures were in place against some of its officials and staff members,

simply because they had carried out the functions they were tasked with under the Rome Statute. Fortunately, we are meeting under more favorable circumstances today. The US administration, under President Biden, has lifted these measures, which were unprecedented in scope and nature. Developments around the globe have also illustrated in the clearest possible terms how much we need the ICC – in Afghanistan, there is a strong concern about the safety of the civilian population, in particular of women and girls, and there are unsettling reports of violence, extrajudicial executions, intimidation and other acts that amount to crimes under the Rome Statute. In these dark days, a glimmer of hope comes from the fact that the International Criminal Court has had an investigation in Afghanistan ongoing for a while, which covers, of course, acts that constitute crimes against humanity. As supporters of the Court, we must speak about the ICC's involvement in Afghanistan frequently and in positive terms. And, we must make it clear that we stand with those who are now at great risk of violence.

Another key development is the political transition in the Sudan – the indictment by the ICC against then President Omar al Bashir led to much political controversy years ago. Today, the Sudanese judiciary itself has indicted the former President, after the people of Sudan opted for political change and turned against a regime that had been thriving on corruption, mismanagement and abuse of its own population. A surrender of former President Bashir to the ICC is a real possibility – we should do what is in our power to make this a reality and to enable the ICC to hold an individual to account who is indicted for committing crimes against humanity and genocide.

Indeed, there can be no question that we need the ICC – and that justice is a prerequisite for sustainable peace, even if sometimes it may be a long time coming. As we gather on the margins of high-level week, we have an opportunity and an obligation to support the ICC at the political-level, as we should be doing throughout the year. The change of leadership in the Court and the politically favorable circumstances offer us a key opportunity to recommit to the ICC and to work with the Court to make it a stronger and more effective institution which can count on our solid support, politically and financially. The Independent Expert Review process offers us a unique opportunity to do just that, while full respect for the judicial and prosecutorial independence of the Court is imperative.

Effective leadership is a key ingredient of our joint success – and I am very grateful to the Chief Prosecutor and the President of the ASP for joining us today. They symbolize a new generation of leadership at the Court, we strongly support their work, and I look forward to hearing their remarks.

Thank you.