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Trump administration issued ultimatum to ICC: Report

The US president reportedly said he will slap further sanctions on ICC staff and potentially escalate to sanction the court itself



The International Criminal Court's building in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 5 September 2011 (Vincent Jannink / AFP)

MEE staff (/users/mee-staff)

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The US government has threatened the

International Criminal Court with new sanctions unless it amends its foundational treaty so it

cannot investigate President Donald Trump and senior administration members, Reuters reported

on Wednesday, citing an unnamed source.

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The ICC, which is also combining with the ICC information investigation provided to them or

(<https://www.middleeasteye.net/countries/israel>) politicians over the Gaza

(<https://www.middleeasteye.net/countries/palestine>) war, which has been recognised as a genocide

by the United Nations, scholars and historians, and end an investigation into potential war crimes

conducted by US troops in Afghanistan.

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If the ICC does not comply, it could face further sanctions against its staff and the court itself, an

unnamed Trump administration official told Reuters.

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The official declined to comment on whether the Trump administration is concerned that it might

be investigated for its series of aggressive, deadly strikes on alleged drug boats in the Caribbean,

which have killed at least 80 people.

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The ICC, however, told Reuters they had not received any requests to investigate US strikes against

Venezuela.

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Middle East Eye first reported (<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/icc-states-united-against-us-pressure-annual-assembly-comes-close>) on Friday that the oversight body of the ICC shunned US demands for the court to drop its investigation into Israeli war crimes and to amend the Rome Statute to prevent the prosecution of nationals from countries that do not recognise the court's jurisdiction.

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Pressure from US

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Diplomats speaking on the sidelines of the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) event last week told MEE that the Trump administration had tried to exert further pressure on the ICC in the lead-up to the ASP meeting by calling on the court to drop its investigations into war crimes in Palestine and Afghanistan as a condition for lifting sanctions that they've collected from your use of their services.

The US also called on member states to amend the founding Rome Statute to prohibit prosecutions of citizens of non-signatory states, a move that would effectively grant immunity to American and Israeli nationals.

The US and Israel are not signatories to the Rome Statute.

An amendment of that nature would also end the Ukraine investigation into alleged war crimes by Russia, a non-member of the ICC.

Based on findings by three diplomats familiar with the matter, MEE revealed that representatives of ICC member states were presented with the US demands by a diplomat from an EU state at a meeting last month.

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The meeting of the ASP, made up of representatives from the 125 countries that have ratified the ICC's Rome Statute, has taken place at a time of unprecedented threats to the court, prompted mostly by its investigation into Israel over alleged war crimes in Gaza and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Sanctions have also targeted judges who worked on the Afghanistan investigation, which, since 2021, has deprioritised investigating US nationals and has instead focused on Afghan nationals.

[ICC judges are currently examining an Israeli challenge to its jurisdiction on the Palestine situation](#), and a separate Israeli complaint, filed on 17 November, seeks to disqualify the prosecutor over alleged lack of impartiality.



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Exclusive: ICC shuns US demands to drop Israel war crimes probe and amend treaty

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ICC prosecutor Karim Khan has been on voluntary leave of absence since May, pending a UN-led investigation into the allegations. Khan strenuously denies the accusations.

Preferences

Since February, Trump's administration has imposed financial and visa sanctions on the prosecutor, his two deputy prosecutors, six judges, the UN's special rapporteur on Palestine, and three Palestinian non-profit organisations.

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