

# “Humanity cries for justice” ICC President says, underscoring importance of Criminal Court

Amidst a slew of high-level events at United Nations Headquarters in New York on Monday, Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, President of the International Criminal Court (ICC) underscored in an interview with UN News that “humanity cries for justice,” and that “no country can do it alone.”

He pointed out that there are more conflicts in the world today than in 1998, when the Rome Statute established the Court to address genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Judge Eboe-Osuji deflected the significance of remarks reportedly made by the US national security advisor earlier this month, that the ICC was an “illegitimate court,” urging countries to focus on why the Rome Statute was adopted.

In response to the advisor John Bolton’s reported remarks indicating that the US would be prepared to ban ICC judges and prosecutors from entering the country, should a proposed investigation into alleged US war crimes in Afghanistan go ahead, the Judge calmly responded that it was “unfortunate that that kind of threat was made,” but again stressed the importance of focusing on “why we have the Rome Statute.”

“The world needs the United States in the ICC...[especially] because they have a long history and experience of supporting these sorts of efforts to address violations,” he said, noting the Nuremberg trials after the Second World War, in which the American judicial system “led the way.”

Judge Eboe-Osuji also pointed out that in response to problems in the former Yugoslavia, genocide in Rwanda and war crimes committed in the Sierra Leone civil war, “the United States played a strong role in insisting that justice must be done post-conflict, and that was done.”

“We do want them to come to the ICC and do the same thing, they know how to do it, they know how to assist.”

*we have to keep our eyes on the ball – ICC President Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji*

“That is what is more important,” he stated, “we have to keep our eyes on the ball.”

“We cannot be distracted, by whatever reasons some people feel irritated by what the Court does,” adding that it would continue to do its work.

He said it was important “for everyone to keep in mind that there are strong systems in place around the Rome Statue that ensures that there is no unfair prosecution against anyone.”

“There is no need for anyone to get carried away at the beginning of the process, even before any preliminary examination or investigation has been begun,” he said, elaborating on the very long process of the Court.

“Humanity cries for justice,” he said, adding that “no country can do it alone..The world needs a collective effort to solve collective problems.”