



# U.S. threatens sanctions on ICC, prosecution of officials

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## **Highlights**

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) said that its work would continue “undeterred” after Washington threatened to prosecute its officials if Americans are charged with war crimes committed in Afghanistan.
- The Hague-based court’s response comes a day after the United States threatened to arrest and sanction court officials should they move to charge any American who served in Afghanistan with war crimes.

## **‘Outright dangerous’**

- White House National Security Adviser John Bolton called the Hague-based rights body “unaccountable” and “outright dangerous” to the United States, Israel and other allies, and said any probe of U.S. service members would be “an utterly unfounded, unjustifiable investigation”.
- The U.S. is prepared to slap financial sanctions and criminal charges on officials of the court if they proceed against any Americans, he added.
- But in response, the ICC declared itself an “independent and impartial judicial institution”.
- It also stressed that it would only investigate and prosecute crimes when the states will not or cannot do so.
- The Hague-based ICC was set up in 2002 with a jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute the world’s worst crimes, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.
- The court, however, does not have the capacity to arrest suspects and depends on member states for their cooperation.
- The United States has not signed up to the court and in 2002, its Congress passed a law enabling Washington to invade the Netherlands to liberate any U.S. citizen held by the court.

## **Additional Info:**

### **International Criminal Court (ICC) or Cour Penale Internationale (CPI)**

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) or Cour Penale Internationale (CPI) investigates and, where warranted, tries individuals charged with the gravest crimes of concern to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.
- The Court is participating in a global fight to end impunity, and through international

criminal justice, the Court aims to hold those responsible accountable for their crimes and to help prevent these crimes from happening again.

- The Court cannot reach these goals alone. As a court of last resort, it seeks to complement, not replace, national Courts.
- Governed by an international treaty called the **Rome Statute**, the **ICC is the world's first permanent international criminal court**.
- The ICC's main office is in **The Hague in The Netherlands**. It has smaller offices in New York City, Kampala, Kinshasa, Bunia, Abéché and Bangui.

### **Status Of India**

- India has neither signed nor ratified the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- Countries which are not party to the Rome Statute are not obliged to hand over suspects.
- The court has jurisdiction only with respect to crimes committed after July 1, 2002, in countries that have ratified its treaty.

### **Difference between ICC and International Court of Justice(ICJ)**

- The ICC is different from the International Court of Justice (ICJ).
- The main difference is that ICJ settles arguments between countries, but the ICC punishes people.

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