



Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations



Interactive panel discussion on the occasion of International Justice Day organized by the Permanent Missions of Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Cyprus, The Gambia, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, State of Palestine, Switzerland, Uruguay and the Coalition for the ICC and Parliamentarians for Global Action

## 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute: the need for universality and the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression

Tuesday, 17 July 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.  
United Nations Headquarters, Conference Room 2

### Opening remarks:

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the United Nations General Assembly

### Moderator:

H.E. Mr. Michal Mlynár, Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute

### Panel:

H.E. Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein

H.E. Ms. Yoka Brandt, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Mr. James Stewart, Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

Mr. Bill Pace, Convenor of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court

H.E. Mr. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Deputy Executive Director of Human Rights Watch

### Closing Remarks:

Mr. Benjamin Ferencz, Former Nuremberg War Crimes Prosecutor

*After the panel discussion, the floor will be opened for interventions by Member States and civil society representatives. The organizers would welcome in particular high-level statements.*

**Background:**

The 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute is a singular occasion to reaffirm our collective commitment to justice for the worst crimes under international law and the rule of law – principles at the foundation of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This commitment is needed now more than ever.

In only two decades, 123 States have joined the Rome Statute, making a public legal commitment to ending impunity for the worst crimes under international law. In addition, 35 ICC States Parties have ratified the Kampala amendments on the crime of aggression. While these numbers are encouraging, extending the reach of the ICC is necessary to address the most serious crimes and to deterring them in the first place. Indeed, too many situations where grave crimes are presently being committed remain outside the ICC's reach. Strengthening support for the ICC to act effectively where it can – while increasing efforts to expand the Rome Statute's membership – will signal the international community's aspirations for accountability.

Aggressive war-making has been labelled “the supreme international crime”. The principle that it is illegal for one State to aggressively wage war on another State has long been enshrined in international law and is at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations. Until recently, however, it was almost impossible to hold the persons in leadership positions – whether military or political – that are responsible for such wars to account. But on this International Justice Day that will change. The ICC will be able to exercise its jurisdiction over the crime of aggression as of 17 July 2018, marking the first time that humanity has a permanent international court with the authority to hold individuals accountable for the commission of the worst forms of the illegal use of force.

This event offers a unique high-level platform for States Parties and other international partners to project publicly a strong and compelling narrative about the ICC's mission in today's world. The event's panel will discuss the importance of the activation of the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression as well as the need for universality of the Rome Statute as amended since its first Review Conference.

The meeting is open to all delegations without prior registration. Special event tickets will be provided to those without a valid UN ground pass. After interventions from the podium, the floor will be opened for statements. The organizers would welcome in particular high-level statements and statements including information regarding the current status of the domestic ratification processes relating to the Rome Statute.

**To reserve a place on the informal speaking list as well as for any further questions, please contact:** Mr. Sina Alavi, Senior Adviser (Legal, Political), Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the UN (+1 212 599 0220 ext. 230 | [SA@nyc.llv.li](mailto:SA@nyc.llv.li)).

**If you do not hold a valid UN ground pass and would like to request a special event ticket, please RSVP to:** Ms. Irene Bruhin: ([IB@nyc.llv.li](mailto:IB@nyc.llv.li)).