



Federal Ministry of Justice

ICC: MALAMI CALLS FOR TRANSPARENT ELECTION OF JUDGES, PROSECUTOR

The Federal Government of Nigeria is committed to supporting a process that is all inclusive and transparently devoid of any sentiment in order to select the best and the most qualified candidates for the coveted positions of Prosecutor and Judges of the International Criminal Court. The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN made this known while delivering Nigeria's Country statement at the 19th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, at the Hague, Netherlands on Monday 14th December, 2020. In a statement issued by his Media Aide, Dr. Jibrilu Gwandu, the Minister said, "Nigeria wishes to reiterate the need not to compromise the issue of high moral character of candidates seeking elective offices within the Court system as that is the only way the credibility of the Court can be sustained".

Malami noted that attacks against the International Criminal Court and its officials continue to weaken the Rome Statute system and its support across the globe. He said the Federal Government of Nigeria has condemned all actions geared towards undermining and weakening the International Criminal Court's ability to freely exercise its mandate.

While renewing Nigeria's commitment to the ICC as the cornerstone of the fight against impunity and a critical element of rules-based international order; Malami expressed Nigeria's commitment to work together with States Parties to oppose efforts to undermine the work of the Court and its independence. "I note with great consternation that the promise and hope offered by the Rome Statute to victims of atrocious crimes worldwide is increasingly threatened by a retreat in multilateral engagement and rising tides of hostility, discrimination, and repression around the world". He commended efforts of the outgoing President of the ICC who is also a Nigerian, Professor Eboe-Osuji, whom Malami said has brought enduring reforms to the Court and spearheaded efforts that have led to a better understanding of the Court on the world stage as well as improved the conditions of service of Judges.

Malami stated that their contributions were geared toward ensuring that jurists of the highest caliber will always aspire for appointment to the Court's judiciary, thereby strengthening the quality of the bench as a whole. Nigeria has taken note of efforts to reform the conditions of service of ICC judges. Nigeria is concerned about the rationale that has now disconnected those conditions from their traditional alignment with the conditions of service of the judges of the International Court of Justice. According to him, "It is true that the conditions of service of the ICC judges need not be formally

linked to those of ICJ judges. But it is important to stress that ICC Judges are not inferior to their counterparts at the ICJ or at the other International Courts in Europe. That equality of stature must also be reflected in parity of treatment in conditions of service”.

The Minister said Nigeria underscores the importance of maintaining the usual arrangement in the administration of international justice, according to which judges of International Courts are compensated at a level above Under Secretaries General in the UN system (USGs).