

US sanctions against ICC judges grant 'impunity' to wanted criminals: *FM spox*

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei on Friday denounced a recent move by the United States to sanction more staff members at the International Criminal Court (ICC), saying the measure amounts to granting brazen and brutal impunity to wanted criminals.

"While genocidal war criminals continue to freely commit crimes against humanity, the US Department of State is intensifying a campaign of intimidation and sanctions against those who seek to hold these criminals accountable," Baqaei wrote on his X account on Friday.

"This represents impunity in its most blatant and brutal form — a profound moral aberration." On Thursday, the US issued a new round of sanctions against ICC staff members, citing a recent ruling blocking Israel's effort to halt a Gaza war crimes investigation.

The sanctions target two judges — Gocha Lordkipanidze of Georgia and Erdenebalsuren Damdin

of Mongolia.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that the two judges "have directly engaged in efforts by the ICC to investigate, arrest, detain, or prosecute Israeli nationals, without Israel's consent, including voting with the majority in favor of the ICC's ruling against Israel's appeal on December 15."

The ICC described Washington's move as a "flagrant attack" on the independence of an impartial judicial institution. In its statement, the ICC warned that threatening judges for upholding the law jeopardizes the entire international legal framework.

The top court emphasized that such measures undermine the rule of law and reaffirmed its support for its personnel and the victims of atrocities.

The US is Israel's biggest ally and has supported its genocidal war in Gaza by continuing to supply the occupying regime with billions in military and economic aid.

"The ICC has continued to en-



The exterior of the International Criminal Court is seen in The Hague, Netherlands, September 22, 2025.
● REUTERS

gage in politicized actions targeting Israel, which set a dangerous precedent for all nations," Rubio said in the statement.

The sanctions are the latest in a series of economic restrictions the administration of US President Donald Trump has placed on ICC members and their associates.

Critics warn such actions could chill investigations across the world and have wide-ranging implications for prosecutors, judges and even witnesses.

In February, for instance, the Trump administration issued broad sanctions targeting ICC staff and anyone assisting the court's investigations against the US and its allies.

The White House continued by issuing individual sanctions against judges and prosecutors it disagreed with.



In June, four judges were sanctioned, two of whom participated in probes regarding US personnel in Afghanistan. The other two were involved in the decision to issue arrest warrants

for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former minister of military affairs Yoav Gallant.

Then, in August, the US expanded the sanctions, taking actions

against two more judges and two ICC prosecutors.

Even entities outside the ICC have been hit with economic penalties as a result of their participation in its investigations.

Israeli violations against Syria pose 'direct threat' to West Asia security: *Iran*

The Iranian ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations warned that Israel's occupation of Syrian territory and acts of aggression against the Arab country endanger peace and security in West Asia.

Speaking at a UN Security Council meeting on Syria on Thursday, Amir Saeid Iravani said the Israeli regime has, over the past year, intensified its unlawful use of force, expanded its military footprint, and sought to consolidate its occupation of Syrian land, Press TV reported.

"Israel's actions are neither defensive nor incidental; they are part of a deliberate strategy to entrench occupation, fragment Syria, and weaken its national cohesion by exploiting ethnic and sectarian dif-



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ferences and promoting separatist agendas," he added. "Such conduct constitutes a direct threat to regional peace and security."

Iravani also condemned last month's Israeli attack on the town of Beit Jinn in the Damascus countryside, which killed 13 people and injured 25 others, as a grave war crime under international law.

The criminal assault and the local resistance to Israeli attacks, he said,

underscore the "destabilizing consequences of prolonged occupation and repeated acts of aggression."

The Iranian envoy further called on the Security Council to take concrete measures to compel the regime to respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. "Continued inaction, selective silence, or the political shielding of Israel by a permanent member of this Council serves only to normal-

ize and legitimize its (Israeli) occupation and acts of aggression and renders the Council's resolutions ineffective and unenforceable," he said, referring to the US support for Israeli occupation and violations of international law.

After the collapse of former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government in December 2024, Israel has launched frequent aerial assaults across Syria and ground incursions in the southern part of the country.

Israel has also set up numerous checkpoints in Syria and abducted its citizens. The regime has further expanded control over the occupied Golan Heights, taking over a demilitarized buffer zone in violation of the 1974 Disengagement Agreement.

Tehran condemns Canada's new sanctions against Iranian officials



Forouzandeh Vadiati

● ISNA

International Desk

The Iranian Foreign Ministry on Friday strongly condemned the Canadian government's move to impose sanctions on four Iranian officials based on "unfounded" human rights allegations.

Forouzandeh Vadiati, the director general for women and human rights at Iran's Foreign Ministry, in a statement described the sanctions as a meddling move stemming from the arrogant mindset of Ottawa's decision-makers.

Vadiati emphasized the lack of any legal or moral basis for Canada's action. "The Canadian government, as the inheritor of the systematic repression of Indigenous peoples' human rights and as a party with a long record of complicity with Israel's genocidal regime

in the killing of the Palestinian people and aggression against other countries in the region, has no legitimacy to make hypocritical human rights claims against Iran," she said.

She also stressed that Canada's unilateral sanctions against Iran target the economic, social, and cultural rights of the Iranian people, and that the Canadian government must be held accountable for the consequences of its actions, which in some cases amount to crimes against humanity.

Her remarks came after Canada in a Monday statement announced a new round of sanctions on four senior Iranian officials over their role on what it claims to be crackdown on protests and dissent in Iran.

Canada's Foreign Minister Anita Anand said that the four officials are being listed under the Special Economic Measures (Iran) Regulations for what she called facilitating and directing repressive policies in the Islamic Republic.

With its latest move, Canada has imposed 18 rounds of sanctions since October 2022 on Iranian officials and entities over alleged human rights violations. It has sanctioned more than 210 Iranian individuals and 254 Iranian entities.

Russia calls on UN nuclear chief to maintain impartiality on Iran

International Desk

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov voiced Moscow's call on Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi to maintain an unbiased professional position of Iran's peaceful nuclear program. "We call on [IAEA] Director General Grossi who pushes for restoring contacts with Tehran to strictly adhere to the principles of work of the IAEA Secretariat, including the neutral,



Sergey Lavrov

● TASS

unbiased professional nature of assessments being presented and the broader activity of this organization," Lavrov said.

Tensions between Iran

and the UN nuclear watchdog have repeatedly flared in recent years, with relations being further strained in the wake of a 12-day aggression in

June that saw Israeli and US strikes on key Iranian nuclear facilities.

Iran suspended its cooperation with the IAEA after the aggression against Iran as per a law adopted by Parliament.

Tensions escalated as Iranian officials said the IAEA effectively provided cover for the strikes by declaring the country in violation of its non-proliferation obligations shortly before the bombardment and then failing to condemn the aggression.

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