
ICC denounces U.S. sanctions on war crimes investigators

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The International Criminal Court (ICC) has condemned a new round of American sanctions on officials probing potential U.S. war crimes, saying Washington's "threats and coercive actions" cannot be allowed to hinder the rule of law.

"These attacks constitute an escalation and an unacceptable attempt to interfere with the rule of law and the Court's judicial proceedings," the ICC said in a statement -- hitting back after the U.S. slapped penalties on a number of court officials investigating war crimes allegations.

They are announced with the declared aim of influencing the actions of ICC officials in the context of the Court's independent and objective investigations and impartial judicial proceedings.

The new U.S. sanctions come after the ICC launched a war crimes investigation into American military personnel, finding reason to believe such acts had been carried out overseas in a preliminary report. Washington has repeatedly slammed the probe, even denying a travel visa to a top ICC investigator, Fatou Bensouda, while vowing further retaliation should the court continue its work.