

US Soldiers Face Unjust Charges by International Criminal Court

As the International Criminal Court (ICC) continues to pursue actions against U.S. citizens, including veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States moved to counter this international body, which has a questionable reputation. The Trump Administration plans to sanction the ICC if the judges proceed with possible charges of war crimes committed by American soldiers.

National Security Adviser John Bolton declared, "The United States will use any means necessary to protect our citizens and those of our allies from unjust prosecution by this illegitimate court." Bolton also called out the court for bowing to pressure from Palestinians, who are also calling for an investigation of Israel. Never mind that the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organization, as terror groups, have the blood of thousands of innocents on their hands. The Palestinian leadership continues to give stipends to the families of their "martyrs," Palestinians who kills citizens of Israel and the United States and die doing so. The Palestinian authority also pays Palestinians who are in prison for carrying out terrorist attacks in Israel.

The Trump administration will consider banning ICC judges and prosecutors from entering the United States, place sanctions on any funds they have in the U.S. financial system, and prosecuting ICC officials in United States courts. Additionally, any country that cooperates with the ICC in prosecuting Americans will risk forfeiting U.S. aid and military assistance. The United States may also look at negotiating new bilateral agreements that will forbid other nations from surrendering Americans to the ICC.

The court is based in the Hague, Netherlands. Founded in 2002, the United States and Russia (among other nations) refused to ratify the treaty or join the legal body. President George W. Bush was firmly against the establishment of the court. President Obama tried to cooperate with the ICC but was largely thwarted by bipartisan opposition in Congress.

The ICC has been investigating possible war crimes in Afghanistan for over a decade. Last November, the investigators asked to include the actions of U.S. military personnel, civilian contractors and members of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The ICC's "Pre-trial Chamber" is now deciding if further inquiries, or criminal charges, are appropriate.

Since Afghanistan became a party to the ICC in 2003, the court now claims jurisdiction over potential criminal acts committed in a member state, even if allegedly committed by individuals whose country of origin (for example, the United States) is not a signatory to the Rome Treaty that established the international judiciary.

It would be an unprecedented relinquishment of U.S. sovereignty over its legal system, and control over its own citizens, to support the broad, sweeping international powers of this controversial court. The decrees of this court, though supported by most member states of the United Nations, are not accountable to any oversight body; not being a nation-state itself, it would be inappropriate to even have an extradition treaty with such a body.

Some misguided Americans applaud the work of the ICC and strongly support the idea of prosecuting U.S. soldiers and other citizens. For example, the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) has assisted the ICC with thousands of victim statements obtained by the CCR.

The CCR is also providing legal counsel and advice to two

detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Sharqawi Al Hajj and Guled Hassn Duran, both of whom claim to be war-crime victims due to their interrogation and detention following the events of 9-11. The CCR claims, "Overall, Al Hajj and Duran's victim's representations make the case for a thorough investigation that brings an end to impunity for over a decade of international human rights violations related to the war in Afghanistan." A CCR spokesperson bemoans the fact that, "To date, no high-level U.S. official from the civilian leadership, military, CIA, or private contractor has been prosecuted for war crimes and crimes against humanity."

As we commemorate another anniversary of the horrific acts of September 11, 2001, we remember the thousands who died in New York City, the Pentagon, and in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. We also remember the sacrifice of over 6,000 U.S. troops who died fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, the grief of their families, and the over 60,000 U.S. troops who were wounded there. {eoa}

For the original article, visit .