

Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on South Africa and Burundi and the International Criminal Court

The European Union deeply regrets the Republic of South Africa's decision to initiate its withdrawal from the Rome Statute. We equally note with deep concern that Burundi has formalised steps to withdraw from the Rome Statute. Until now, no State has ever withdrawn from the Rome Statute.

South Africa played a significant role in the establishment of the ICC and was one of the first signatories of the Rome Statute. We will continue to engage with both countries on how they can remain partners to the Rome Statute.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a key institution to assist citizens achieve justice when confronted with the most serious crimes, where this is not possible at the national level. A majority of African situations were submitted by the national authorities concerned. The Court is also involved in situations all over the world.

We all have a shared interest in strengthening the rule of law and working together with the ICC, including along the lines suggested by the President of the Rome Statute's Assembly of States Parties.

The EU and its Member States remain staunch supporters of the ICC and are committed to full co-operation on the prevention of serious crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Court. Where concerns are raised within the framework of the Rome Statute, we remain open for constructive discussion.