Cour
Pénale
Internationale

International
Criminal
Court

Integrated Strategy for External Relations, Public Information and Outreach

I. Summary

The Integrated Strategy for External Relations, Public Information and Outreach sets out the goals, framework and mechanisms for the external communication activities of the International Criminal Court (ICC). It is an "integrated" strategy in that it coordinates the external relations, public information and outreach work of the Presidency, Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) and the Registry; ensuring that these diverse activities fall within a common strategy, with mutually reinforcing messages, activities and goals.

The integrated strategy sets out a basic platform, which will be supplemented by strategies for specific situations and projects. It is an evolving product, which is re-evaluated annually or as needed and refined in light of experience. The integrated strategy is an internal Court document. In order to provide as much information as possible regarding its external communications strategy, however, the Court is publishing this summary of the document.

The integrated strategy establishes goals for external communication, defines the areas of activity, and canvasses the constraints, challenges, strengths and opportunities for the ICC as well as the range of possible external perceptions. It articulates basic message themes, guidelines in formulating messages, and formal aspects of messages.

The institutional aspects of implementation centre around six major hallmarks: coordination between organs, integration between functions, planning and proactive approach, staff training and discipline, external input, and evaluation. A permanent working group on external communication was created in order to provide this coordination; to implement, evaluate and refine the strategy; and to develop subsidiary policies and strategies. Details on implementation are provided for external relations, public information and outreach. The document sets out short and medium term objectives in each of these areas, and also establishes performance indicators now reflected in the Court budget.

II. Process

The first version of the strategy was developed by an inter-organ working group, which drew upon many internal and external documents and recommendations. The document was

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approved by the Coordination Council (the President, the Prosecutor and the Registrar) in July 2005. At that time, the Coordination Council established a permanent working group to implement and refine the strategy, develop subsidiary instruments and coordinate activities. The document is currently being revised on the basis of expert consultations and experiences gained as well as the development and submission to the Assembly of States Parties of a detailed strategic plan for outreach.

III. Nature of document

Basic platform: The strategy document does not attempt to address all aspects of external relations, public information and outreach; rather it sets out a basic platform with the overarching strategies and priorities. It will be supplemented by strategies for specific situations and projects. Such strategies, which may be Court-wide or organ-specific, will be consistent with this integrated strategy and contribute to goals outlined herein.

Evolving product: The document is an evolving product. It is re-evaluated and revised annually, on the basis of experience gained.

Internal document: As is the case with most organisations' external relations strategies, the integrated strategy is an internal document. However, in order to provide as much information as possible regarding its external communications strategy, the Court is making available this summary of the document. Other various subsidiary documents, such as the strategic plan for outreach, are publicly available.

IV. Context and conceptual framework

1. Goals

External relations, public information and outreach advance the strategic objectives of the Court as articulated in the Court's strategic plan in the following complementary ways:

- Building and maintaining **cooperation and support** for the activities of the Court. This includes obtaining direct cooperation and logistical support, as well as creating a supportive enabling environment through raising awareness, managing expectations, engaging in dialogue and obtaining feedback.

- Making public the judicial activities of the Court, which is integral to delivering **public and transparent justice**. This is important as an element of fair trial as well as for transparency and accountability to stakeholders. The Court strives to understand and act upon the information needs of affected populations, to build understanding and to foster a local sense of engagement.

- Increasing the **broader impact** of the Court, contributing to lasting respect for and enforcement of international justice. Increasing the awareness of ICC activities, and

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building networks in the course of ICC activities, will help to help to foster national measures and international cooperation and contribute to the prevention of crimes.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of the strategy document, the following definitions are applied:

- **External relations** is a dialogue between the Court and States Parties, Non-States Parties, international organisations, NGOs and other **key partners** that have direct roles in the activities and the enabling environment of the ICC. This process aims towards building and maintaining support and cooperation.

- **Public information** is a process of delivering accurate and timely information about the principles, objectives and activities of the Court to the **public at large and target audiences,** through different channels of communication, including media, presentations, and the web site.

- **Outreach** is a process of establishing sustainable, two-way communication between the Court and **communities affected by situations that are the subject of investigations or proceedings**. It aims to provide information, promote understanding and support for the Court's work, and to provide access to judicial proceedings.

There can be overlap between these activities, which further highlights the importance of an integrated approach to external relations, public information and outreach.

3. Key Partners and Audiences

The strategy identifies key partners and audiences, including: States Parties; States directly related to a situation; non-States parties; intergovernmental organisations, including regional organisations (e.g. United Nations, European Union, African Union); non-governmental organisations; victims and affected populations; other civil society (including academic institutions, research institutes and foundations); general public and media; and defence counsel, victim counsel and legal associations.

4. Constraints and Challenges

The integrated strategy is based on an analysis of the Court's context, including constraints and challenges. In summary form, the following are some examples:

Constraints inherent to the ICC institution: The tension between public information needs and other obligations and imperatives of the Court (confidentiality, preserving integrity of investigations, protection of victim and witness security and well-being, rights of accused); the different functions of each organ under the Statute; the complexity of the concepts to be conveyed; the

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novelty of the institution and the paradigm; the expectations gap; dependence on outside support to carry out our mandate.

General environment: Lack of general public knowledge; opposition from some sources; deliberate or inadvertent misinformation.

Situation-specific environment: The distance between The Hague and affected territories; unstable, unsafe environments; lack of access to media, internet, electricity; lack of implementing legislation; polarized populations and media distortion; deliberate manipulation of information; under-resourced local media and civil societies; security and independence concerns of potential partners; lack of education or illiteracy in some affected populations; suspicion of outside intervention; difficulty of providing materials in local languages.

5. **Strengths and Opportunities**

The integrated strategy is based on analysis of the Court's context, including strengths and opportunities. In summary form, the following are some examples:

"An idea whose time has come": Broader international justice system, trend toward greater collective cooperation; general abhorrence of massive crimes.

Global support: Large and growing number of States Parties; sustained support from States Parties, NGOs and the global public; good relations with international organisations; support from media, academia, legal profession and legal institutions.

Features of the ICC: Permanence (able to engage in longer term relationship-building and external relations planning); independence (impartial party); obligation to cooperate (Part 9 of Statute); and safeguards against abuse.

Innovations: Principle of complementarity; victims participation; victims reparation; Statute provisions on interests of victims and interests of justice; the ICC can learn from experiences of previous tribunals to shape new best practices; the ICC is a new, developing institution with a dedicated staff.

V. Messages

Provisional message themes: The document develops provisional message themes, such as core attributes of the Court which should underlie all communications. These are grouped into six sub-components: judicial; impartial; effective; efficient; mindful of context; responsive to victims. For each of these components, key messages are provided to elaborate upon the component.

Guidelines in formulating messages: Messages must reflect the core message themes; be responsive to the diversity of audiences and hence reflect an inclusive international perspective; manage

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expectations and explain the need for support and cooperation; and situate the ICC as a global institution and part of a broader international justice movement.

Formal aspects: Messages must be accurate yet simple to reach a non-specialist audience. Because of complexity of procedural and legal concepts, context should be explained (for example in background sections of press releases). Where different roles of organs require different messages, the roles should be explained.

VI. Implementation: institutional aspects

1. Coordination between organs

Approach: The ICC must avoid duplication and fragmentation in the activities of organs. At the same time, the Statute, as well as principles of due process, necessitate strict separation and independence in many areas. The solution therefore is (a) to delineate roles of each organ, clarifying division of labour and facilitating planning and (b) to promote coordination between organs in all areas of common interest.

Roles: The strategy sets out roles of organs in external communication. For example, the Presidency acts as the "external face" of the Court as a whole, situates the ICC in the international landscape, and through providing information about the Court's role, mandate and activities, contributes to building acceptance of international justice. The OTP builds support and cooperation for OTP activities and explains OTP policies and activities. The Registry provides basic information on the Court, makes the proceedings public and accessible, facilitates access of victims to the Court, conducts relations with counsel and provides services to the organs in the dissemination of information.

Coordination: The strategy sets out modes of coordination in over a dozen areas, including visits, missions, negotiation of agreements, diplomatic briefings, the Assembly of States Parties, press releases, press briefings, and outreach activities.

External Communication Working Group: A centerpiece of the strategy is the creation of a standing inter-organ external communication group comprised of representatives of the three organs and the three areas of activity, which has been approved by the Coordination Council. The group is responsible for continued implementation and refinement of the strategy, development of subsidiary strategies and policies; exchanging information, and addressing external communication issues.

2. Integration between functions

In addition to coordination between *organs*, the strategy is also based on integration between *functions*. This includes integration of external relations, public information and outreach, so that all areas of activities are complementary and involve mutually reinforcing goals, priorities and messages. It also includes integration of these external communication activities with operational

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and strategic decision-making. For example, participation of public information experts means that spokespersons are well versed in the issues and activities, and means that public information dimensions are adequately considered in planning.

3. Planning and proactive approach

While the fields of external relations and public information are inevitably to some extent reactive, the integrated strategy emphasizes planning and preparation. This approach enables the Court to plan its activities more efficiently, to set priorities and to be proactive in its external communication. Examples include the establishment of a planning calendar and annual framework for major external relations events; common priority-setting for Court-wide agreements; preparation of materials for public information staff; crisis communications policies; and development of situation-specific outreach strategies and field presences.

4. Guidelines on media communications

The strategy outlines induction on key external communication policies; periodic measures to keep staff informed of major developments; and the importance of ensuring compliance with staff obligations regarding contact with the media. A common communication strategy would be undermined if unauthorized staff members issues contradictory messages.

5. External input

Under the strategy, the ICC will continue to draw on the expertise of others in various ways (networks and periodic meetings are already established with tribunals, NGOs, academia, governments and international organisations). External experts have been consulted in the refinement of the integrated strategy. The Court may often rely on willing partners to help disseminate messages. External communication is a two-way process, not only disseminating information but also collecting views and inputs from key partners and audiences in order to evaluate and improve operations and strategies.

6. Evaluation

The strategy is based on continued self-assessment and evaluation of activities and strategies, including "lessons learned" exercises after engagements. The External Communication Working Group reviews and refines the strategy on an annual basis in light of experience gained.

VII. Implementation – activities by area

1. External Relations

The external relations narrative sets out the approach in several key areas:

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Events: With respect to events and meetings, organs will: share information on upcoming events; prioritise cost-effective opportunities; avoid duplication where it is only necessary for one organ to participate; consult on common messages and objectives; prepare common reports; and identify options for follow-up.

Assembly of States Parties: The Court will continue to prepare its common messages, priorities and objectives in advance of the ASP. Interaction with the ASP is seen as a year-long cycle, including preparation of documents, dialogue and feedback cycle with the CBF and States Parties, ASP participation, and "lessons learned" exercise to prepare the next cycle.

Diplomatic briefings: Diplomatic briefings maintain information flow with States Parties between ASP sessions. The strategy provides for identification and allocation of main messages, more substantive and topical presentations, and continuous refinement of formats. A similar approach is foreseen for NGO briefings.

Negotiating agreements: Organs will share information on intent to negotiate agreements; set common short and medium-term priorities for Court agreements; and for each Court agreement, will coordinate on goals, negotiation strategies and drafting, and will work through a common delegation with common reporting. Short-term objectives will focus on completing basic agreements most essential to carry out activities in the situations under investigation -- the UN, AU, EU, United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) and territorial states.

Other topics: The strategy also addresses collection of information on channels of communication and requests for cooperation; development of networks and operational contacts; relationship with the UN; field presence; integration of external relations into investigation planning; and coordination on contacts with donours. The strategy also addresses longer term goals of building lasting respect for international justice. For example, in the course of developing networks to assist its activities, the Court will produce, as a helpful by-product, networks by which partners may assist not only the Court but also each other. Finalising a crisis communications plan is a 2007 objective for the External Communication Working Group.

2. <u>Public information</u>

Preparation: The public information narrative calls for preparation of guidelines on boundaries between confidentiality and disclosable information, procedural flow charts, materials on recurring legal questions, and refined banks of messages.

Tools: The narrative calls for a series of public information tools, including a handbook for journalists, records of frequent questions, print, radio and video information products, and power point presentations. Other tools and means will also be further developed, including use of M2-Presswire, radio, television, and coordination with ICC partners. Press releases will be reserved for major newsworthy developments, and the group has developed alternative means to meet the objective of transparency with respect to lesser developments (e.g. updates on the website). The newsletter is now produced every month.

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Web-site: A revamp of the ICC web site is underway to adapt it to the increase of judicial activities. A key goal of the revised website is to enhance accessibility. It will have an issue-based structure and will feature a search engine and greater accessibility, particularly of Court-related documents.

Other activities: Other important activities include supporting media coverage of the Court's role and activities through press briefings, background information, regular exchanges with press associations. Co-operation agreements with States and institutions will, where appropriate, include a commitment to assist in promoting public understanding about the principles and activities of the ICC. Offices in the field will have public information and outreach components. Initiatives are underway to encourage former interns, visiting professionals and staff to work as supporters and multipliers of messages of the Court.

Evaluation and development: Interviews will be recorded and archived; media monitoring systems (already in place) will be used to identify information needs; and methodologies will be refined to periodically evaluate impact.

3. Outreach

General: The integrated strategy sets out the general framework for outreach activities. It is supplemented by a detailed strategic plan for outreach requested by the Assembly of States Parties in 2005.[1] Specific outreach action plans have been developed for each situation under investigation and will be updated regularly based on experience, external input and developments. The Registry leads on the planning, development and implementation of outreach-related activities, in coordination with other organs.

Planning: Outreach strategies and activities are influenced by the context in which the Court operates; the particular information needs of target groups and communication tools used; as well as the phase of judicial activity. Planning includes evaluating the context; identifying information needs of affected communities and appropriate two-way communication tools; identifying priorities; identifying potential partners and intermediaries; conducting risk and impact assessments; developing action plans based on the phase of judicial activity; developing appropriate messages; and evaluating the impact of outreach activities. Security issues, including for locally-recruited staff and potential partners, may preclude the normal range of outreach activities and at times require more low-key and indirect methods.

Communication tools: The choice of communication tools and techniques is based on the situation, nature and needs of target groups and the phase of judicial activity. Some of these tools include: print and broadcast media; pamphlet and poster campaigns; Court public information and judicial documents; media training; the Court's website; seminars and workshops; video screening of judicial proceedings; townhall discussions; and theatre and drama.

[1] Strategic Plan for Outreach of the International Criminal Court (ICC-ASP/5/12), 29 September 2006.

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Implementation: To maximise the effectiveness of outreach activities, internal coordination is a priority. The Public Information and Documentation Section (PIDS) of the Registry is responsible for planning and implementing the Court's outreach programme. Implementation requires coordination and consultation between the different sections and divisions of the Registry, including sections dealing with victims and counsel, and other organs of the Court to ensure comprehensive and coherent messages and efficient use of resources. This coordination is lead by PIDS within the External Communication Working Group. Coordination of outreach planning, development and implementation between headquarters and the field offices is also overseen by PIDS.

Field presence: Field office planning and budgeting now includes outreach staff and budget. The Court must have sufficient resources at both the headquarters and field levels to effectively conduct outreach activities.

VIII. Objectives

The strategy highlights specific short-term (one year) and medium term (two-to-five years) objectives in each area. For illustrative purposes, some of the short-term objectives for the second year of implementation of the strategy (June 2006-June 2007) are as follows:

Institutional aspects: Continued weekly meetings of the External Communication Working Group, implementation and refinement of the integrated strategy; support to New York Liaison Office.

External relations: Continued implementation of annual framework for regularised dialogue with States Parties; continue development and refinement of Court messages; finalisation of crisis communications plan.

Public information: Refine specified public information tools; finalise revamped Court website.

Outreach: Evaluate and revise detailed strategic plan for outreach based on external input and experience; increase activities to provide information to victims and witnesses and other members of affected communities; reevaluate and refine action plans for each situation.

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