

# International Criminal Court Meeting in Costa Rica

By Jaime  
Lopez

**ICC Media Release** — Government representatives from various Central American countries expressed their commitment to support and cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) during the High-level Regional Seminar held on 9 and 10 July in San José, Costa Rica. The event was organized by the International Criminal Court, in cooperation with the Government of Costa Rica, and was sponsored by the [European Commission](#).

During the two days, senior officials from Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and El Salvador, discussed with representatives of the Presidency, Office of the Prosecutor and Registry of the ICC, as well as with regional experts, topics of mutual interest in the field of international cooperation.



ICC Meeting in San Jose, Costa Rica

The ICC needs the cooperation of States to effectively investigate and prosecute perpetrators of international crimes and in particular to facilitate the requests for judicial assistance, ensure the arrest and surrender of suspects, freezing and seizure of assets, relocation of witnesses, enforcement of sentences, and provisional release of detainees.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Costa Rica, H.E. Mr Manuel González Sanz expressed his support for the ICC: “We stand firm against those who instead of seeing this triumph of the international community, which is the International Criminal Court, try to minimize it. We have cultural, political, economic and religious differences, but that is why we have achieved a vital consensus to establish this emblematic institutional justice.”

ICC President, Judge Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, expressed gratitude for the strong support that the Court receives from the region. “Latin American countries have steadily supported the establishment and functioning of the Court from its inception, in recognition that in order to prevent and combat international crimes, it is also necessary to have a complementary institution that can, under certain circumstances, remedy the lack of genuine action by States” said the President. The President also reminded that there are still “areas of opportunity to enhance support from the region.”

In the margins of the seminar, the ICC President and the ICC Registrar, Mr Herman von Hebel, had a working breakfast with the President of Costa Rica, H.E. Mr Luis Guillermo Solís, and other senior officials to assess the challenges of the ICC and the importance of cooperation.

President Fernández also participated in a meeting with parliamentarians from Costa Rica and El Salvador to discuss the implementation of the [Rome Statute](#) and the ratification by the latter State of the ICC’s founding text. During the meeting organized by the Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), an NGO, El Salvadoran parliamentarians expressed their willingness to continue working on the ratification in order to make it a reality in the near future.

The International Criminal Court is an independent, permanent court that tries persons accused of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, namely the crime of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression. Latin American countries have been strong supporters of the establishment and functioning of the ICC. Of the current 123 States Parties to the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the ICC, 27 are from Latin America and the Caribbean.

