



Concept Note

Retreat between the International Criminal Court and African States Parties to the Rome Statute

(22-23 November 2017, Addis Ababa)

This Retreat is in part a continuation of a series of meetings previously held in Addis Ababa which took the form of joint seminars between the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the African Union (AU), held in July 2011, October 2012, July 2014 and October 2015. These seminars brought together ICC experts, representatives of the AU Commission, as well as ambassadors and legal advisers to the Permanent Missions of AU Member States, and were aimed at (i) improving relations between the ICC and the AU through dialogue and debate on issues of common interest; (ii) providing accurate information about the Court, its mandate, structure and functioning, as well as information on developments in judicial proceedings; and (iii) creating conditions for increased cooperation between the ICC and the AU.

In 2016, in line with comments and recommendations made by the participants during the Joint ICC-AU Seminar in 2015, a new approach was adopted in which the event was organized by the ICC with emphasis on its commitment to African States Parties to the Rome Statute as key stakeholders in the Court, and continuing engagement with the AU, of which its Office of Legal Counsel attended the event. Thus, the main objective of the 2016 Retreat was to enable a frank and constructive dialogue between the ICC and the African States Parties as a key measure to strengthen relations between the Court and its African partners and address challenges within the context of this relationship.

In keeping with the positive comments received and results obtained during the 2016 Retreat, as well as the ICC's desire to continue its dialogue with African States Parties to the Rome Statute, the general themes for the 2017 Retreat will include cooperation and complementarity, enhancing communication, and the position of victims. Some of the general objectives will be to share experiences and explore further avenues of discussion, engagement and cooperation, including within the framework of the complementarity principle enshrined in the Rome Statute, and exchange views on the relationship between the ICC and national, sub-regional and regional organisations and judicial institutions.