



**Cour
Pénale
Internationale**

**International
Criminal
Court**

Gender Equality and Enabling Environment Strategy

**for the International
Criminal Court**

2026-2029

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the Gender Equality and Enabling Environment Strategy for the International Criminal Court is to advance gender equality and diversity and enable safe and inclusive workplace processes over the period 2026-2029. The Strategy represents the Court’s steadfast commitment to reaffirming the importance of gender equality and workplace standards.

A defining feature of this new cycle is the shift in terminology from “Workplace Culture” to “**Enabling Environment**”. This change is not trivial; it aligns the Court with international best practices, which recognize the term “enabling environment” both as the most accurate descriptor of the institutional conditions of gender equality and as a fundamental prerequisite to achieving it. Whereas “workplace culture” often focuses on interpersonal norms, an “enabling environment” encompasses the full spectrum of policies, systems, leadership responsibilities and organizational mechanisms that actively facilitate equitable participation. This terminology is consistently used in global gender frameworks, including the *Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System*, which define such environments as those that embrace equality, eradicate bias and ensure equal opportunities for all personnel¹. By adopting this language, the Strategy clearly conveys its comprehensive scope, addressing the structural, procedural and cultural dimensions that together constitute the essential foundation upon which gender equality is built.

The implementation of this Strategy will involve a shared institutional effort anchored by the **Focal Point for Gender Equality**, who will play an active role in fostering coherence and ensuring that gender equality considerations are meaningfully integrated across all initiatives. However, the Strategy recognizes that many actions – particularly those addressing broader organizational practices, management approaches and staff well-being – fall within the remit of other institutional stakeholders. Responsibility for these actions remains with the designated stakeholders; the Focal Point for Gender Equality will provide support through coordination and consolidated reporting. This approach reinforces a clear allocation of roles, respecting the Court’s distributed capacities while supporting a unified, institution-wide effort to advance gender equality.

The Strategy addresses gender equality and related priorities within the International Criminal Court, as recognized in its Strategic Plan 2026-2029. Rooted in the Court’s foundational core values of Integrity, Accountability, Fairness and Inclusion, the Strategy provides a course of action to address the findings and recommendations made by the Independent Expert Review as well as the relevant gaps and needs in relation to gender equality and an enabling workplace identified in recent staff engagement surveys. The

¹ UN Women, *Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System*, 2019, developed in support of the UN Secretary-General’s *System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity*, and *Supplementary Guidance on the Enabling Environment*.

Strategy reflects the Court’s steadfast commitment to implementing transformative change, building on the institutional journey from the final report of the IER in 2020 to the latest staff engagement surveys conducted in 2018, 2021 and 2025 and the Pulse surveys conducted in 2022 and 2023, all of which have been incorporated into the ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029. Furthermore, the development, adoption and implementation of the second cycle of the Strategy by 2029 will reflect the Court’s renewed commitment to catalysing tangible progress towards gender equality and to addressing inequality during the UN Decade of Action (2020-2030) so as to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 5 on Gender Equality and SDG 10 on Reduced Inequalities. The Strategy builds on a review of similar strategies adopted by UN organizations. It also reflects the input and comments gathered during the extensive internal and external consultations carried out by the Court between September 2025 and March 2026 with key stakeholders such as the Human Resources Section, the Independent Oversight Mechanism, the Staff Union Council, the Ombuds’ Office, the Immediate Offices of the Principals, the Occupational Health Unit, the Security and Safety Section and civil society organizations. Over the next four years, the Strategy will focus on three main areas of action to achieve gender equality:

**STRATEGIC
PRIORITY 1:**

**Gender-responsive,
safe and inclusive
processes**

**STRATEGIC
PRIORITY 2:**

**Gender-equitable
work-life balance**

**STRATEGIC
PRIORITY 3:**

**Gender parity,
diversity and
inclusive leadership**

Progress will be monitored regularly by the Focal Point for Gender Equality against the annexed *Implementation Checklist*, in parallel with the monitoring of the ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029 and the related key performance indicators. A final report on implementation will be issued in 2029, serving as the basis for review and development of the next strategic cycle.

SECTION 1

Strategic Foundation and Alignment

1.1 Strategic mandate

The International Criminal Court (ICC or “the Court”) launched its first comprehensive [Court-wide Strategy on Gender Equality and Workplace Culture \(“GEWC Strategy”\)](#) in 2022 to foster gender parity and equal opportunities at the Court and to nurture an enabling, inclusive and safe working environment over the period 2023-2025. The GEWC Strategy was launched at a side event during the twenty-first session of the Assembly of States Parties (“the Assembly”) in December 2022.²

While the GEWC Strategy is the first of its kind adopted by an international court or tribunal, it was built on similar efforts undertaken by other international organizations, including the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism³ and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.⁴ The GEWC Strategy shows the Court’s clear commitment to a work environment that is safe, inclusive and enabling, in accordance with the [UN’s System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity](#) of 2017 and the UN Women Enabling Environment Guidelines of 2019.⁵

In the present document, reference is made to legislative mandates relevant to improving gender parity and intersectionality, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women,⁶ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,⁷ the Violence and Harassment Convention of the International

Labour Organization (ILO),⁸ the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination⁹ and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.¹⁰

Informed by the findings of the staff survey, which showed a marked improvement in staff perceptions of the Court’s efforts on gender equality, the Gender Equality and Enabling Environment Strategy for the International Criminal Court (“Strategy”) for 2026-2029 sets out concrete actions to further advance gender equality, diversity, ethical values and a gender-sensitive workplace environment at the Court. Under the Strategy, the ICC will continue to implement policies and practices in support of work-life balance and enhanced staff well-being. Finally, efforts to support inclusive leadership, gender parity and equal opportunities for career advancement within the Court will be promoted during the Strategy’s lifespan.

The Strategy embodies the Court’s ongoing efforts to improve gender equality and staff well-being, and draws on the guidelines developed by the United Nations, with a focus on long-term organizational change. The development, adoption and implementation of the Strategy reflect the Court’s commitment, as one of the many organizations involved in the [Generation Equality movement](#), to catalysing progress towards gender equality during the UN Decade of Action and to delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals.

² [The ICC launches its first Strategy on Gender Equality and Workplace Culture](#), 9 December 2022.

³ International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism, [Gender Strategy and Implementation Plan](#), 30 September 2022.

⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, [Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment \(2022-2026\)](#).

⁵ UN Women, [Enabling environment guidelines for the UN system](#), 2019.

⁶ UN General Assembly, [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#), 18 December 1979.

⁷ UN Women, [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), 1995.

⁸ ILO, [Violence and Harassment Convention](#), 2019 (No. 190).

⁹ UN General Assembly, [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), 21 December 1965.

¹⁰ UN [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#), 13 December 2006.

1.2 Key alignments

The Strategy is aligned with existing strategic documents that specify concrete organizational efforts to be undertaken in the coming years. The ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029 sets out strategic goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) which are relevant to gender equality, inclusion, diversity and an enabling environment at the Court, such as:

- Strategic Goal 6: **Uphold Core Values.** Ensure the integration of the Court's Core Values by fostering a culture of integrity, fairness, accountability, and inclusion across all operations, prioritizing staff well-being and professionalism, to strengthen the Court's effectiveness.
- Strategic Goal 7: **Promote Gender Equality.** Integrate a gender-responsive perspective into all aspects of the Court's investigations, judicial processes, programmes and operations.
- Strategic Goal 8: **Foster Diversity.** Increase equitable geographical representation and gender balance across all staffing levels, in particular in senior positions, advancing the integration of diversity, equity and inclusion perspectives in all aspects of the administration of the organization.

The Strategy reflects the Court's strong commitment to enacting concrete and long-term changes towards gender equality and an enabling environment in accordance with specific recommendations of the Assembly,¹¹ the 2020 Final Report of the Independent Expert Review (IER)¹² and the ICC staff engagement surveys of 2021,¹³ 2023 and 2025 on gender equality and workplace culture.

¹¹ [ICC-ASP/1/Res.10](#) and annex thereto, adopted by consensus at the Assembly's third plenary meeting on 9 September 2002, concerning the general criteria of geographical representation and gender balance to be considered in the selection of Court staff. [Report of the Bureau on equitable geographical representation and gender balance in the recruitment of staff of the International Criminal Court](#), 2 December 2022, ICC-ASP/21/27.

¹² [Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System](#), 30 September 2020.

¹³ Strategy on [Gender Equality and Workplace Culture for the International Criminal Court](#), 2022, p. 8.

Whereas the first strategy was designed to address some of the findings and recommendations of the 2020 Independent Expert Review, this Strategy will fill the remaining gaps, consolidate the work carried out and respond to the needs related to gender equality and an enabling workplace that were identified in the ICC staff engagement surveys conducted in 2021, 2023 and 2025. The Review Mechanism identified work culture and gender equality as priority areas in its [Comprehensive Action Plan](#), which was adopted by the Bureau of the Assembly on 28 July 2021. Moreover, gender equality is considered a strategic area for the Court, as reflected in the [High-Level Statement on Gender Equality](#) adopted by the Principals of the Court on 30 April 2021.¹⁴ The ICC Staff Engagement Survey of 2021 found that "gender equality remains a key priority for the organisation to address, together with connected topics such as ethics and standards of conduct, leadership with emphasis on values, engagement and internal communication, well-being (including stress prevention), and staff selection and career development".¹⁵

Notably, positive improvements were recorded following the appointment of a dedicated Focal Point for Gender Equality (FPGE) and the implementation of the GEWC strategy. According to the 2025 Staff Engagement Survey, 68 per cent of staff respondents reported that "the ICC values diversity and inclusion", which translates into an 11-point increase from the 2023 Staff Engagement Survey. It was further noted that "this indicates substantial levels of staff approval and recognition regarding the Court's efforts to promote gender awareness and equality within the organisation". In 2024-2025, "the implementation of the GEWC Strategy reflected a concerted response to the needs identified through extensive surveys and strategic planning. It also signified the Court's ongoing commitment to creating a balanced and equitable workplace".¹⁶ The Final Report on the Implementation of the Court-wide Strategy on Gender Equality and Workplace Culture reports that qualitative gains were matched by concrete institutional progress across several key areas. Not only did the Court achieve gender parity among its staff in 2022; it also sustained this momentum, reaching 52 per cent female representation by the end of 2024. Beyond staffing metrics, the Court focused on its protective infrastructure by promulgating

¹⁴ [ICC Principals adopt High-Level Statement on Gender Equality: "Gender equality is not only right and necessary but a driver of performance and success for the organisation"](#), 30 April 2021.

¹⁵ GEWC Strategy, 2022, p. 8.

¹⁶ [Report of the Court on Human Resources Management](#), 24 April 2024, ICC-ASP/23/2, p. 23, para. 142.

critical Administrative Instructions on unsatisfactory conduct, investigations and the prevention of harassment, alongside a Presidential Directive protecting against retaliation. This robust framework was actively embraced by the workforce, as evidenced by mandatory training completion rates, with 1,090 staff completing training on prohibited conduct and 991 completing training on gender equality by June 2025. Additionally, the introduction of enhanced policies on flexible working arrangements and parental leave further demonstrated the Court's dedication to integrating professional and personal life, confirming that the first strategy translated high-level commitments into operational realities.

1.3 Methodology

The development of the present Strategy is based on analysis of the findings, results, lessons learned and best practices identified during the implementation of the first strategic cycle (2023-2025). In addition, special attention was given to strategic alignment with the new cycle of the ICC Strategic Plan, the organ-specific strategic plans and the related KPIs. The methodology used to develop the Strategy relies on the triangulation of secondary and primary data and information. The analysis of secondary data (desk review) was based on the Final Report on the Implementation of the Court-wide Strategy on Gender Equality and Workplace Culture (2023-2025), reports from the FPGE, annual reports of the Human Resources Section (HRS), Lessons Learned from the transitional mandate of the first FPGE as set out by the Office of Internal Audit in 2024, annual reports of the Independent Oversight Mechanism (IOM), the Review Mechanism's reports on the implementation of IER recommendations, Administrative Issuances, reports from the Staff Union Council (SUC), the Ombuds' annual reports from 2023 to 2025 and staff survey results.

Drawing on this comprehensive data analysis, a first draft (zero version) of the Strategy was produced with the support of a consultant and the OTP Gender Equality Focal Point. This initial draft served as a basis for further refinement. In addition, meetings were held with international organizations in The Hague in 2024. Internal meetings with stakeholders were conducted between September 2025 and March 2026 to gather input and feedback through consultations with the FPGE, HRS, the Immediate Office of the Registrar, the Registry Legal Office, the Immediate Office of the President, the Office of the Prosecutor, the IOM, the Occupational Health Unit, the SUC, the Ombuds, the Security and Safety Section and the Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Committee (SWEC).

1.4 Governance, monitoring and reporting

Monitoring and reporting will be conducted by the FPGE, who will report on the Strategy annually in a dedicated section of the Court's report on human resources management to the Committee on Budget and Finance. The FPGE will also report to the SWEC. Responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy will be shared as follows:

- **Focal Point for Gender Equality:** Leads coordination, ensures gender mainstreaming and consolidates reporting on gender-specific outcomes
- **Institutional stakeholders (as per the annexed *Implementation checklist*):** Hold primary responsibility for undertaking actions within their mandates (e.g., policy implementation, well-being programmes), with the support of the FPGE for alignment purposes

SECTION 2

Priorities and Actions

The present Strategy represents the Court's strong commitment to reaffirming the importance of gender equality and enabling workplace standards. The three identified Strategic Priorities explicitly tackle the intersecting dimensions of workplace issues and gender. Where broader matters of organizational culture arise which fall outside the Strategy's primary focus on gender, the relevant actors are to be engaged with accordingly to ensure coordinated institutional action. The Priorities aim to integrate gender equality and equity into all policy development, strategic planning and operational activities in an effort to maintain gender perspectives across the Court.¹⁷ This includes gender analysis, gendersensitive training, inclusive team composition and the development of internal guidance tools on gender. The Strategy applies a twin-track approach, combining the systematic integration of gender perspectives across policies and institutional processes with targeted interventions to address structural inequalities through the lens of intersectionality, so as to include considerations on multiple and intersecting inequalities. In so doing, the Strategy aims to amplify its transformative outcome on gender-related topics, beyond simply acknowledging gender differences and needs and challenging belief systems.

A) THREE MAIN PRIORITIES

The Strategy identifies three main strategic priorities and specific components or actions required to achieve them, and sets out the associated timeline and reporting mechanisms. The strategic areas were identified through gender assessments and were based upon extensive internal and external consultations with selected stakeholders.

¹⁷ ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029, Strategic Goal 7: "Promote a gender-responsive perspective".

2.1 Gender-responsive, safe and inclusive processes

A foundation of trust: A workplace cannot be truly inclusive if it is not fundamentally safe. By focusing on active enforcement and gender equality, this pillar moves beyond simple policy statements to create an enabling environment. Importantly, the Strategy works to establish clear behavioural boundaries and focuses on strengthening the regulatory framework to ensure that prohibited conduct is not tolerated.

To support these efforts, the Court will invest in a complete ethical framework for the organization and in a strengthened internal justice system that is more agile, more accountable and more professionalized. The Court will introduce a dedicated ethics function, ensuring that its values are not just aspirational but actually embedded in daily decision-making. Through mandatory training, robust data collection on misconduct and the promotion of the Fairness, Accountability, Integrity and Inclusion Resolution (FAIIR) Framework, this pillar aims to create a culture where staff feel empowered to speak up and where the institutional infrastructure is strengthened to support an enabling work environment. Recognizing that safety also encompasses psychological well-being, the Court will implement key actions endorsed by the leadership under the Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) Prevention Project, reaffirming its support for staff exposed to distressing material, high-pressure environments and cumulative stress. Awareness-raising campaigns, onboarding sessions and capacity-building sessions on gender equality and prohibited conduct will be delivered to ICC personnel over the period 2026-2029 to promote trust. In the same spirit, the Court will promote an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQIA+ persons, in line with the [UN Secretariat strategy on the protection from violence and discrimination of LGBTQIA+ persons](#) published in 2024.

2.2 Gender-equitable work-life balance

A holistic approach: Under this Priority, the Court will continue to implement, monitor and, where necessary, review policies and practices in support of work-life balance and staff well-being, such as flexible work arrangements, genderneutral parental and family leave schemes and the elements of the Legal Aid Policy which concern the conditions of appointment of defence and victims' counsel and their team members.

Relevant policies include:

- the Administrative Instruction on Parental and Family Leave ([ICC/AI/2024/003](#)), promulgated on 20 December 2024;
- the Administrative Instruction on Flexible Working Arrangements ([ICC/AI/2022/004](#)), promulgated on 14 September 2022; and
- the ICC Legal Aid Policy¹⁸ which has been adopted and entered into force on 1 January 2024.¹⁹

In addition, in order to conform to UN standards and in consultation with stakeholders, the Court will review the Guideline for Breastfeeding which it has implemented since 2005. Adjustments will be taken into consideration to seek the alignment of this Guideline with the UN Secretariat Policy on Breastfeeding ([ST/SGB/2019/1](#)). The Court will also raise awareness of other health-related matters intersecting with the topic of gender equality, such as menopause.

2.3 Gender parity, diversity and inclusive leadership

Driving representation and culture: Representation is the visible metric of equity, and inclusive leadership is the engine that sustains it. Building on the positive outcomes that stemmed from the implementation of the GEWC Strategy, this pillar focuses on **temporary special measures** to accelerate progress towards equality. Actions under this component go beyond recruitment numbers to transform the *process* of hiring and advancement: ensuring job descriptions are gender-neutral, increasing mentorship opportunities for underrepresented groups and creating a clear framework of internal **mobility** that allows talent to flow across organs. Crucially, this pillar integrates **intersectionality** into its approach, recognizing that gender intersects with race, disability and other identities to create unique experiences. By enhancing **exit**

¹⁸ *Official Records of the Assembly of States Parties to Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, twenty-second session, New York, 4-14 December 2023* (ICC-ASP/22/20), vol. I, part. III, [ICC-ASP/22/Res.3](#), section K, para. 89 and paras. 90-95.

¹⁹ A draft was presented on 22 November 2023 and subsequently adopted at the twenty-second session of the Assembly, which took place from 4-14 December 2023. See [ICC-ASP-22-09](#).

data collection and ensuring rigorous vetting, the Court aims to build a workforce that not only reflects the diversity of the world it serves but also possesses the inclusive leadership skills to guide the organization forward.

B) CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Under the Strategy, the Court seeks to strengthen internal communication so as to ensure transparency and accountability, while also fostering inclusion and diversity. This important effort will be pivotal to supporting the Court as it reinforces internal communication across all strategic areas and components identified by the Strategy. In addition to strengthened internal communication, coordination and reporting are essential cross-cutting enablers of the Strategy. Effective coordination helps ensure that the various organs and sections of the Court work in alignment, exchange relevant information and support one another's efforts, thereby fostering coherence across all strategic areas of the Strategy. To complement this approach, stronger monitoring and reporting practices will provide the Court with a clearer understanding of progress, highlight areas in need of attention, and support a culture of transparency and institutional learning. Together, coordination and reporting will help sustain momentum, reinforce shared accountability and ensure that the Court's gender equality and enabling environment objectives remain visible and actionable across the institution.

PRIORITY 1: GENDER-RESPONSIVE, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE PROCESSES²⁰

The first priority is comprised of a series of components/actions, outlined below:

1. Promote implementation of the ICC regulatory and disciplinary frameworks to address prohibited conduct.
2. Implement the FAIR Framework and establish the ethics function.
3. Promote workplace well-being at the Court.
4. Deliver mandatory training for ICC personnel on gender, inclusion and diversity, on policies relating to disciplinary proceedings, on rights and duties of personnel and on mechanisms of internal justice relating to prohibited conduct and retaliation.
5. Develop and adopt gender-disaggregated data collection in the IOM's reporting process to collect information on matters of alleged prohibited conduct relating to any form of perceived discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, or abuse of authority.

²⁰ Priority 1 is aligned with the ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029, and specifically with the following Strategic Goals:

- **Strategic Goal 6:** Uphold Core Values: "Ensure the integration of the Court's Core Values by fostering a culture of integrity, fairness, accountability, and inclusion across all operations, prioritizing staff well-being and professionalism, to strengthen the Court's effectiveness".
- **Strategic Objective 6.1:** "Promote a culture of integrity and fairness by establishing an ethics function, as well as clear ethical guidelines, and providing ethics training for staff".
- **Strategic Objective 6.5:** "Strengthen internal communication to ensure transparency and alignment across the Court, encouraging open dialogue, regular feedback loops, and staff engagement in key decision-making processes".
- **Strategic Goal 7:** "Promote a gender-responsive perspective: Integrate a gender-responsive perspective into all aspects of the Court's investigations, judicial processes, programmes, and operations".



6. Integrate core values into daily operations by incorporating integrity, fairness, accountability and inclusion into operational procedures, decision-making processes, recruitment and performance evaluations.
7. Promote an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTIQIA+ persons within the Court.
8. Promote the integration of gender and inclusion perspectives in policies and guidance documents.

Promote implementation of the ICC regulatory and disciplinary frameworks to address prohibited conduct

Under this component, the Court will continue to implement, monitor and, where necessary, review key Administrative Instructions (AI), including the [Administrative Instruction on Unsatisfactory Conduct and Disciplinary Proceedings](#)²¹ of 14 March 2022, the [Administrative Instruction on Investigations of Unsatisfactory Conduct](#)²² of 14 March 2022 and the [Administrative Instruction on Addressing Discrimination, Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority](#)²³ ("Anti-Harassment AI") of 6 April 2022, which sets out a zero-tolerance policy regarding such behaviours. These efforts will also aim to address gender-related issues, including gender-based violence, discrimination and harassment, in a more concrete manner. The Court's existing legal framework for addressing prohibited conduct was strengthened by the [Administrative Instruction on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) ("PSEA AI") promulgated in March 2023.²⁴ The PSEA AI clearly sets out the policies and procedures governing the prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, which apply both to staff and to non-staff personnel. On 8 February 2024, a Presidential Directive on Protection Against Retaliation ([ICC/PRES/D/G/2024/001](#)) was promulgated to regulate protection from any form of retaliation against Court personnel by establishing rules and procedures to protect those who report suspected unsatisfactory conduct or engage in any other protected activity within the meaning of Section 4 of the Directive.

²¹ [ICC/AI/2022/002](#).

²² [ICC/AI/2022/001](#).

²³ [ICC/AI/2022/003](#).

²⁴ [ICC/AI/2023/001](#).

2.

Implement the FAIR Framework and establish the ethics function [ICC Strategic Objective 6.1]²⁵

The Court is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards of integrity, fairness and professionalism, recognizing that its legitimacy relies not only on the soundness of its judicial processes but also on the ethical values it upholds. To strengthen its institutional culture and maintain a foundation of trust, the Court is establishing a dedicated independent ethics function as part of the FAIR Framework outlined in the 2027 Proposed Programme Budget. The ethics function will offer independent guidance – both preventive and responsive – along with confidential advice to ensure consistent ethical practices across the institution. It will play a central role in cultivating a healthy, value-driven environment by promoting shared behavioural standards and supporting ethical leadership. Under the FAIR Framework, the Court will consolidate the Ombuds Office, the Office of the FPGE and the new Ethics Office (with the Ethics Officer position awaiting classification), and will establish a common administrative resource for the Office of the FPGE and the Ethics Office. Each entity will retain its distinct mandate, but the Framework will help ensure that policies, behavioural expectations and support pathways are aligned, accessible and consistently followed. The ethics function will complement and collaborate closely with existing support structures. This coordinated approach will contribute to a more integrated, supportive and responsive institutional environment in which staff can thrive and the Court's core values are reflected in all aspects of its work. The expected outcomes include improved trust in accountability mechanisms, clearer institutional commitment to respect and equality, and the introduction of a focal point for ethics and culture that supports prevention, increases staff confidence and strengthens institutional credibility.

3.

Promote workplace well-being at the Court

In line with Strategic Goals 2 (Safeguard Operations) and 6 (Uphold Core Values), this action will focus on prevention, early awareness and structured support, complementing broader well-being and management reforms. The Court will implement key actions endorsed by leadership. These will include awareness and information sessions on general well-being, mental health and stress

²⁵ ICC Strategic Plan 2026-2029, Strategic Objective 6.1: "Promote a culture of integrity and fairness by establishing an ethics function, as well as clear ethical guidelines, and providing ethics training for staff".

4.

Deliver mandatory training for ICC personnel on gender, inclusion and diversity, on policies relating to disciplinary proceedings, on rights and duties of personnel and on mechanisms of internal justice relating to prohibited conduct and retaliation

Under this component, the Court will continue to provide all ICC personnel with mandatory gender, inclusion and diversity training and training on prohibited conduct, including discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse, abuse of authority and retaliation.

a) Mandatory gender, inclusion and diversity training

The Court will continue its efforts to provide mandatory gender, inclusion and diversity training to all ICC personnel. The FPGE, in close collaboration with HRS, launched the Gender Equality: Key Concepts and Practices training for ICC personnel in English in November 2024 and in French in February 2025. This mandatory training introduces learners to the basic concepts that underpin gender equality and outlines best practices for challenging biases and fostering a diverse, respectful work environment. The Gender Equality: Key Concepts and Practices training will be delivered during the Strategy's lifespan over the period 2026-2029 as a mandatory prerequisite for personnel at the Court. The modules include theoretical and practical components and provide actionable insights to promote gender equality and inclusion across the organization. The course also refers to the Anti-Harassment AI, since it aims to educate staff members and non-staff personnel on the ethical and legal implications of prohibited conduct at the Court, thereby promoting compliance with the Court's legal framework.

b) Mandatory training on the disciplinary framework regarding prohibited conduct

The aim of this component is to improve understanding of different types of misconduct in the workplace, related administrative and legal procedures and the mechanisms available to report cases of misconduct, including acts of discrimination and retaliation, sexual harassment and exploitation and abuse of authority. In this regard, the Court will continue to provide all personnel with the mandatory training programme aimed at raising awareness of the disciplinary frameworks surrounding discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority, in line with the Anti-Harassment AI. The “United to Respect” online training course *Creating a Harmonious Workplace and Addressing Prohibited Conduct at the ICC* was coordinated and created by HRS for this purpose.²⁶ The Court initially launched the course in English in November 2024, and a French version was published in March 2025. The training will be mandatory for all ICC personnel during the period 2026-2029 under the Strategy to improve understanding of different types of misconduct in the workplace.

5.

Develop and adopt gender-disaggregated data collection in the IOM’s reporting process to collect information on matters of alleged prohibited conduct relating to any form of perceived discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, or abuse of authority

In 2024, the IOM strengthened its data collection process to categorize allegations of prohibited conduct – specifically discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority. The updated internal system now organizes and systematizes information to enable disaggregated analysis by type of misconduct. Building on this improvement, the IOM will include gender-disaggregated data on alleged misconduct in its annual report and will continue to enhance gender-focused categorization throughout the Strategy’s lifespan, while fully safeguarding the confidential information of those involved. Categorizing

²⁶ The “United to Respect” online training course was created thanks to inter-agency collaboration with the United Nations. The mandatory training results from a joint effort by the OTP Working Climate Change Group, the IOM, the Ombuds, the FPGE, Staff Counsellors and the SUC. Their work was coordinated by HRS.

6.

Integrate core values into daily operations by incorporating integrity, fairness, accountability and inclusion into operational procedures, decision-making processes, recruitment and performance evaluations [ICC Strategic Objective 6.3]

The Court-wide Core Values Project was launched in July 2022 with the aim of fostering a positive workplace culture that reflects the Court’s values both internally and externally. The Court adopted the core values of Integrity, Fairness, Accountability and Inclusion in January 2024. These values were developed on the basis of staff members’ contributions and were implemented in close cooperation with multiple stakeholders. Overall, more than 400 staff members from all organs of the Court participated in the initiative, and approximately 35 team workshops were facilitated between 2022 and 2024. The high level of engagement demonstrated strong staff interest in contributing to a positive change in workplace culture and therefore in the creation of an enabling environment. The work carried out as part of the project included strategy proposals, methodology design, inter-organ workshops, internal campaigns, and efforts to build facilitation capacity within the Court. Since the beginning of 2026, the next phase of the Court’s Core Values Project has focused on implementation, with a view to anchoring the core values at three levels of the organization: (1) the individual level, (2) the team level and (3) the organization as a whole. This phase aims to foster an enabling environment in which staff can demonstrate pride in their work and a strong commitment to the Court’s core values. During the implementation phase, efforts are being undertaken to embed the core values across the Court, including through leadership behaviour, team culture, decision-making processes and internal communication and learning initiatives. The values will be progressively reflected, as appropriate, in recruitment, onboarding, learning and development processes, performance evaluation practices and broader human resources frameworks, with a view to strengthening alignment between day-to-day operations and the core values of Integrity, Fairness, Accountability and Inclusion. In parallel, managers and staff are encouraged to promote

respectful, inclusive and collaborative working environments and to contribute collectively to sustaining a positive workplace culture, including through performance management.

7

Promote an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTIQIA+ persons within the Court

The Court reiterates its commitment to fostering a respectful, inclusive and supportive working environment for all personnel, consistent with its values of dignity, equality and non-discrimination. This includes affirming that LGBTIQIA+ persons form an integral part of the Court's diverse workforce and should be able to work in an atmosphere free from violence, discrimination or bias. In this context, and drawing on frameworks such as the 2024 UN Secretariat Strategy on Protection from Violence and Discrimination of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ+) Persons,²⁷ the Court will continue to consider ways to promote awareness, dialogue and understanding that contribute to an inclusive institutional culture. These efforts will complement ongoing HR initiatives to attract diverse candidates and to support an environment that enables the full participation of all staff members.

8

Promote the integration of gender and inclusion perspectives in policies and guidance documents

Throughout the implementation of the Strategy, organs and sections will be encouraged to consider gender equality, inclusion and diversity perspectives when drafting, revising and interpreting internal policies, procedures and guidance materials. As relevant opportunities arise, the FPGE will provide advice on Administrative Instructions, Presidential Directives and Policies to support the integration of gender-responsive and inclusive elements. This consultative role will enable the FPGE to provide advice on inclusive language, equity considerations and alignment with international best practices, while ensuring that organs retain flexibility to adapt such guidance to their operational requirements. By promoting this collaborative, request-based approach, the Court strengthens coherence, consistency and awareness of gender and inclusion across its internal governance framework.

²⁷ [Available here](#).

PRIORITY 2: GENDER-EQUITABLE WORK-LIFE BALANCE²⁸

The second Priority is comprised of a series of components/actions, outlined below:

9. Promote consistent consideration of the AI on Flexible Working Arrangements.
10. Ensure implementation of the ICC Parental Leave and Family Leave Policy.
11. Follow the progress of the Joint Committee on Legal Aid's work under the Legal Aid Policy to the extent that it pertains to conditions of service.
12. Review the ICC Guideline for Breastfeeding to uphold international standards.
13. Promote awareness surrounding menopause in line with international best practices.
14. Develop gender-responsive knowledge products to support managers in creating an enabling environment.
15. Launch a Court-wide campaign to promote the main themes underpinning this Priority.

9

Promote consistent consideration of the AI on Flexible Working Arrangements

The Court is committed to nurturing a culture supportive of work-life balance and flexibility. Flexible working arrangements are an important component of a gender-responsive workplace, helping to attract and retain a diverse workforce by supporting the integration of personal and professional responsibilities. The AI on Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs), promulgated on 14 September 2022, establishes the conditions under which staff members of the Court may benefit from flexible working arrangements, leading to a better

²⁸ In alignment with the ICC Strategic Plan, Strategic Goal 6: "Ensure the integration of the Court's Core Values by fostering a culture of integrity, fairness, accountability, and inclusion across all operations, prioritizing staff well-being, and professionalism, to strengthen the Court's effectiveness".

work-life balance. “The Court hereby recognizes the importance of flexible working arrangements in balancing the demands on staff while at work with life outside the office (Section 1.1).” “[The AI] applies to all staff members holding a fixed-term or a short-term appointment” (Section 1.2). “Subject to the conditions set out in this administrative instruction, the following flexible working arrangements are available to staff members: (i) Flexible working schedule; (ii) Compressed working schedule; (iii) Remote working; and (iv) Scheduled breaks for outside learning activities (Section 2.1).”²⁹ A first review of the AI on FWAs was completed in September 2024, two years after its issuance, as provided for in its section 9. The Court developed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on FWAs, in line with the AI’s provisions, which are accessible to all staff on the HR Portal. The Court will continue to disseminate this information internally over the period 2026-2027 for the benefit of new ICC personnel. Furthermore, staff in a supervisory position will be briefed on the AI on FWAs and its significance for personal and professional life balance, so as to improve its implementation.

10.

Ensure implementation of the ICC Parental Leave and Family Leave Policy

The ICC Parental Leave and Family Leave Policy was promulgated in December 2024. The new Administrative Instruction on Parental and Family Leave ([ICC/AI/2024/003](#)) sets out gender-neutral rules concerning parental leave. The AI “applies to all staff members holding a fixed-term or a short-term appointment” (Section 1.2). “Staff members who become parents without giving birth shall be granted 16 weeks of parental leave with full pay” (Section 3.1), and “staff members who become parents by giving birth shall be granted 16 weeks of parental leave with full pay, as well as an additional 10 weeks of combined prenatal and postnatal [...] leave with full pay, bringing the total duration of their parental leave to 26 weeks” (Section 4.1).³⁰ Before the promulgation of [ICC/AI/2024/003](#), the Principals of the Court had already brought the Court’s practices into alignment with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) Decision on Parental Leave Policy within the UN Common System³¹ through transitional measures which entered into force on 1 January 2023. In sum, the Court had already been compliant with the gender-neutral provisions of the ICSC Decision on Parental Leave Policy since the beginning of 2023.

²⁹ [Administrative Instruction on Flexible Working Arrangements](#), ICC/AI/2022/004.

³⁰ [ICC/AI/2024/003](#).

³¹ [UN Report of the International Civil Service Commission for 2022](#).

11.

Follow the progress of the Joint Committee on Legal Aid’s work under the Legal Aid Policy to the extent that it pertains to conditions of service

The Court’s new Legal Aid Policy³² has been adopted and entered into force on 1 January 2024.³³ The purpose of the Policy is to establish a framework that allocates sufficient resources to defence and victims’ teams representing the interests of their indigent clients, and to provide for effective and efficient representation in proceedings before the Court. With regard to optimal working conditions, the Legal Aid Policy also sets out concrete social support measures to improve conditions of appointment of counsel, members of defence teams, legal representatives of victims and members of their teams. These measures include a compensation scheme for taking leave (annual leave, certified medical leave, parental and adoption leave, extraordinary leave), fixed working-time commitments with a defined scope, a minimum appointment period, and access to the Court’s framework against discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority, which is applicable to counsel and their team members for purposes of prevention, support and assistance. Under this strategy, the Court will monitor and review the progress of the Legal Aid Policy, including through the work and reports of the Joint Committee on Legal Aid, to the extent that the Legal Aid Policy pertains to the conditions of service of counsel and members of their teams.

12.

Review the ICC Guideline for Breastfeeding to uphold international standards

Under this component, the Court will review the Guideline for Breastfeeding implemented by the Court since 2005 to conform to UN standards. Adjustments should be taken into consideration to ensure the ICC Guideline for Breastfeeding complies with the UN Secretariat Policy on Breastfeeding of 21 January 2019 ([ST/SGB/2019/1](#)). Section 1 of the United Nations Secretariat Policy on Breastfeeding outlines the daily entitlement to time off from work to express milk or breastfeed an infant. Section 1.1 reads “Staff members who are nursing mothers of infants under two years of age

³² [ICC-ASP/22/Res.3](#), section K, para. 89 and paras. 90-95.

³³ A draft was presented on 22 November 2023 and subsequently adopted at the twenty-second session of the Assembly, which took place from 4-14 December 2023. See [ICC-ASP-22-09](#).

shall be entitled to daily time off to express milk and/or breastfeed their infant during working hours”. Section 1.2 provides “Staff members who are nursing mothers shall be allowed to bring their breastfed infants to work and to take regular breaks throughout the workday to breastfeed their infant. Staff members who do not bring their breastfed infants to work may avail of up to two hours daily to express milk and/or breastfeed their infant”. The Court-wide Guideline for Breastfeeding provides that “[a]ll staff members with breastfeeding infants, under the age of one year, are entitled to time away from their desks for the purpose of breastfeeding their infants or expressing milk.”, and that “[a] breastfeeding mother may absent herself from work for a total of one hour daily for the purpose of nursing her child or expressing milk and is given a reasonable time off for commuting, subject to a maximum of 60 minutes per day to do so”. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) recommend breastfeeding up to 2 years or beyond.³⁴ Under the ICC’s current Guideline for Breastfeeding, mothers are entitled to an hour off per day for the purposes of breastfeeding or expressing milk. WHO has outlined that most babies need to breastfeed 8 to 12 times per 24 hours in the first six months³⁵. The Court will review its Guideline for Breastfeeding to conform to UN standards.

13.

Promote awareness surrounding menopause in line with international best practices

Under this component, the Court will work to increase awareness and understanding of menopause and perimenopause in the workplace, in line with international guidance emphasizing the importance of addressing menopause as part of a gender-responsive institutional culture. International organizations and expert bodies highlight that menopause, while a natural stage of life, remains insufficiently recognized and often surrounded by stigma, which can affect women’s well-being and their inclusion in the workplace. The ILO³⁶ notes that menopause has traditionally been treated as an

³⁴ WHO and UNICEF recommend breastfeeding up to 2 years and beyond. According to WHO, “breastmilk provides all the energy and nutrients that the infant needs for the first months of life, and it continues to provide up to half or more of a child’s nutritional needs during the second half of the first year, and up to one third during the second year of life”. Source: https://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1

³⁵ WHO, Breastfeeding, Questions and answers, 2 October 2024. [Available here.](#)

³⁶ [Is the menopause a workplace issue? | The Future of Work Podcast](#)

invisible personal matter, despite evidence that symptoms – such as anxiety, sleep disturbances and cognitive difficulties – can affect work participation and retention. Global evidence³⁷ highlights that promoting dialogue on menopause is essential to ensuring that women feel acknowledged and supported at all stages of their working lives. In this context, the Court will promote staff awareness regarding menopause by disseminating information and by including material about menopause in broader communications on gender equality and well-being. These efforts will aim to normalize discussions of menopause, enhance collective understanding of its impacts and foster an environment in which staff feel supported and respected with regard to matters relating to women’s health. Specifically, the Court will promote awareness regarding menopause in line with international best practices, reinforcing its commitment to an inclusive, respectful and gender-responsive workplace culture,³⁸ and will continue to review other gendered concerns beyond menopause.

14.

Develop gender-responsive knowledge products to support managers in creating an enabling environment

Managers play a decisive role in shaping the enabling environment necessary for gender equality, staff well-being and equitable access to institutional policies. UN Women underscores that flexible work policies, gender-responsive practices and work-life balance policies only become effective when managers implement them consistently, noting that managerial engagement is essential to progress towards gender parity and organizational effectiveness. Creating gender-responsive work environments requires targeted tools that enable leaders to identify gender barriers, respond appropriately to staff needs, and cultivate inclusive workplace environments.

To support managers in fulfilling this critical role, the FPGE, in consultation with the SUC, will develop a suite of gender-responsive knowledge products – including practical guidance notes,

³⁷ [Spotlight – Building menopause-friendly workplaces](#)

³⁸ International best practices, as referred to in the preceding footnotes and including those promoted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women through the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs), recognize menopause as a women’s health issue requiring institutional awareness and action across sectors, including public institutions and international organizations, as part of efforts to promote dignity, equality and inclusive workplace cultures.

toolkits and short reference materials – to help supervisors understand the gendered dimensions of workplace dynamics and their responsibilities in fostering an enabling environment. These materials will empower managers to implement relevant policies fairly, engage in supportive dialogue with staff and model behaviours that sustain a culture of dignity, respect and gender responsiveness across the Court.

15.

Launch a Court-wide campaign to promote the main themes underpinning this Priority

Awareness-raising is a crucial step towards institutional gender equality. Organization-wide awareness and capacity-building initiatives are essential to creating shared understanding, addressing bias and fostering inclusive environments. Additionally, sustained organizational engagement and communication are necessary to dismantle systemic gender barriers and make progress towards SDG 5. Reflecting this guidance, the Court will launch a flexible, Court-wide campaign to promote the themes underpinning this Priority. The specific theme(s) will be identified during implementation to ensure relevance to evolving institutional needs. Activities may include coordinated communications, spotlight features and awareness-raising events accessible to staff across duty stations and categories. This campaign will reinforce the Court's commitment to fostering a gender-equitable working environment, strengthening shared understanding and encouraging collective engagement with the values underpinning this Priority.

PRIORITY 3: GENDER PARITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP³⁹

The third Priority is comprised of a series of components / actions, outlined below:

16. Improve inclusion and diversity within the Court by implementing targeted recruitment strategies, ensuring equitable opportunities for all staff.
17. Further develop the mentorship programme aimed at inclusively empowering staff by providing them with tailored mentoring opportunities focusing on professional development, leadership training and career guidance.
18. Develop a staff mobility framework for the Court across all organs.
19. Step up ongoing efforts regarding the language and key components of job descriptions and vacancy announcements to ensure they are gender-neutral and inclusive.
20. Ensure that onboarding / induction sessions are provided to all ICC staff, interns and visiting professionals, including sessions on gender awareness, policies regarding harassment and disciplinary proceedings, rights and duties of personnel and mechanisms of internal justice.
21. Enhance the collection of gender-disaggregated data on departing personnel, in particular regarding workplace culture concerns and recommendations.
22. Use recruitment screening mechanisms.
23. Continue to pursue efforts regarding external staff mobility through the consistent operationalization of the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances.
24. Monitor and ensure implementation of the ICC AI on Temporary Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Parity and the AI on Staff Selection.

³⁹ In alignment with the ICC Strategic Plan (2026-2029).

16.

Improve inclusion and diversity within the Court by implementing targeted recruitment strategies, ensuring equitable opportunities for all staff [ICC Strategic Objective 6.2]

Enhanced inclusion and diversity at all levels of the Court are crucial to fostering an effective and innovative institution capable of addressing the complexities of international justice. To achieve this, the Court is working on initiatives intended to have an impact on recruitment strategies and involving gender balance, geographical diversity and equal access to opportunities. These efforts aim to create a supportive culture that values every individual, ultimately embedding inclusion and diversity into the core of the Court's operations. Among other actions, these efforts will include a review of the language used in vacancy announcements so as to reach, and encourage applications from, a more diverse pool of candidates.

17.

Further develop the mentorship programme aimed at inclusively empowering staff by providing them with tailored mentoring opportunities focusing on professional development, leadership training and career guidance [ICC Strategic Objective 8.2]

The Court will expand its mentorship programme aimed at inclusively empowering staff – specifically women and individuals from underrepresented regions – through tailored mentoring opportunities focusing on professional development and career guidance. This initiative seeks to address systemic barriers to advancement by fostering inclusive growth and connecting mentors across the Court's various organs for purposes of skills-building and knowledge-sharing. By offering individualized support, the programme aims to cultivate diverse talent, enhance staff satisfaction and align with the Court's broader strategic goals of inclusivity and organizational excellence. The programme fosters cross-organ collaboration and knowledge-sharing, contributing to staff retention and satisfaction while addressing systemic barriers to advancement.

18.

Develop a staff mobility framework for the Court across all organs

With regard to staff mobility, the Court is advancing a Court-wide, skills-based job architecture aligned with UN-wide standards to support transparent, inclusive and effective talent management. Developed in cooperation with the UN Global Centre for Human Resources Services (OneHR) and supported by external expertise, this architecture is based on job networks, job families, a shared skills glossary and gender-neutral generic job descriptions (GJDs). It is intended to provide a common framework for recruitment, development and mobility, while helping to reduce bias and support more gender-balanced talent pipelines. This job architecture will serve as the foundation for internal and external mobility, including mobility with UN partners, in line with applicable AIs and the Staff Rules. Building on this framework, the Court will pursue a structured approach to staff mobility that supports professional development, institutional learning and geographical representation and gender balance (GRGB), and which reinforces a One Court culture. Progress and results under this strategic objective will be reported through implementation and monitoring mechanisms.

19.

Step up ongoing efforts regarding the language and key components of job descriptions and vacancy announcements to ensure they are gender-neutral and inclusive

As part of the Job Families Project (*Internal Mobility*) created in line with the relevant IER recommendations,⁴⁰ the Court is advancing the use of standardized GJDs across job families, using inclusive, genderneutral and skills and competencybased language. These GJDs are intended to define core duties and responsibilities, technical skills, behavioural competencies and qualifications and will include the Court's core values, thereby promoting greater consistency, transparency and alignment with modern talent management practices. Genderneutral terminology, such as the use of "applicant" and "incumbent" rather than genderspecific language, is embedded as a standard feature of job descriptions and vacancy announcements. By adopting this approach, the Court seeks to strengthen genderresponsive and inclusive recruitment

⁴⁰ [Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System](#) – Final Report, 30 September 2020, ICC-ASP/19/16, section II, p. 51, recommendation 92.

and outreach practices, while supporting fair, unbiased assessment and facilitating mobility and career development across the organization. In addition, the Court will seek to reflect inclusive and gender-responsive language more consistently across its public career and recruitment web pages, including the ICC jobs page, with a view to supporting GRGB. This will include presenting information in a way that highlights institutional values such as work-life balance, flexibility and staff well-being, which are recognized as contributing to the Court's attractiveness to a diverse pool of candidates.

20.

Ensure that onboarding/induction sessions are provided to all ICC staff, interns and visiting professionals, including sessions on gender awareness, policies regarding harassment and disciplinary proceedings, rights and duties of personnel and mechanisms of internal justice

Under this component, the HRS staff onboarding programme will continue to afford new staff members, interns and visiting professionals the opportunity to become acquainted with the Court's policies concerning harassment and disciplinary proceedings, the rights and duties of personnel and the Court's mechanisms of internal justice. Onboarding sessions include expert briefings from relevant stakeholders such as the IOM, the FPGE, the SUC, the OHU/Staff Counsellors and the Ombuds, covering topics including gender awareness, harassment prevention, disciplinary procedures, staff rights and duties and core values. These steps will ensure that all new staff members, interns and visiting professionals receive a comprehensive briefing on prohibited conduct and gender dynamics from the start of their tenure, laying the foundation for an informed and sensitive workplace. In parallel, HRS is exploring opportunities to further modernize onboarding-related processes, including the gradual introduction of more digital and automated solutions for onboarding, offboarding and staff movement processes. Such an approach could help streamline workflows, foster a more transparent and coherent staff experience, and support efficiency.

21.

Enhance the collection of gender-disaggregated data on departing personnel, in particular regarding workplace culture concerns and recommendations

HRS has implemented a series of actions aimed at ensuring that departing personnel provide feedback on their experience at the Court. Since 2020, all IVPs have been required to complete an exit survey as a mandatory part of their check-out process. Staff members currently have the option to provide their feedback in a voluntary exit survey sent with the separation email. The exit survey was updated by HRS in the first quarter of 2024, with input from the SWEK, the FPGE and the SUC. For example, gender options were extended beyond "Male" and "Female" to include "Transgender", "Gender -non-conforming" and "I prefer not to disclose". Furthermore, two options were added to the reasons for leaving the current position, namely "Discrimination in the work environment related to sexual orientation or gender identity" and "Discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, abuse of authority and/or bullying". The FPGE will continue to provide technical support to HRS for the exit survey.

22.

Use recruitment screening mechanisms

As part of its broader efforts to strengthen safeguarding and integrity in recruitment and engagement processes, the Court continues to explore the potential use of external and inter-organizational screening mechanisms that support background checks in relation to serious misconduct and other prohibited conduct. The Court is reviewing options, and such mechanisms may include cooperative platforms and arrangements that facilitate responsible information-sharing across organizations with a view to preventing the recruitment of individuals whose conduct would be incompatible with the Court's values and standards. Any exploration of such options is undertaken with due regard to the Court's legal and regulatory framework, data protection and confidentiality requirements, institutional independence and appropriate governance safeguards. In parallel, the Court continues to apply and enhance its internal vetting measures in line with applicable AIs, while remaining attentive to developments in good practices across the international system.

Continue to pursue efforts regarding external staff mobility through the consistent operationalization of the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances

With the promulgation of the Court's new Administrative Instruction on [Inter-Organisational Transfer, Secondment and Loan of Staff Members](#) (ICC/AI/2024/002) in December 2024 during the first strategic cycle, i.e. under the GEWC Strategy, the Court provided a solid legal basis for inter-organizational mobility pursuant to the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances. The purpose of this AI is to regulate the management of the transfer, secondment or loan of staff members between the Court and other international organizations, with the overall intent of building a competent, versatile, multi-skilled and experienced international civil service (section 1). Staff members of the Court holding fixed-term appointments may be considered for the following types of inter-organizational moves: (a) transfer; (b) secondment; and (c) loan (Section 2.1).⁴¹ Staff members become eligible for secondment or loan after three years of service at the Court (Section 2.2). The implementation of these provisions will continue with a view to prioritizing knowledge exchange and renewing institutional capacity. The Court has developed FAQs to provide staff with further explanations regarding the options available under this agreement. The aforementioned AI is available on the Court's HR Portal.

gender parity in all types of posts where a gender imbalance persists. To achieve this, the new policy on Temporary Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Parity ("Temporary Special Measures AI") will be promulgated in 2026. Special measures applicable to recruitment and selection procedures are also being considered, with the aim of improving existing measures concerning gender balance. This will be issued in parallel with a new AI on Staff Selection, which will incorporate these special measures into recruitment processes to ensure gender balance. To ensure alignment with the upcoming Temporary Special Measures AI and the AI on Staff Selection, HRS will consistently collect disaggregated GRGB data to measure gender parity in staffing accurately during the Strategy's lifespan.

Monitor and ensure implementation of the ICC AI on Temporary Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Parity and the AI on Staff Selection (ICC Strategic Objective 8.3)

The Court will implement the proposal from the first strategic cycle, i.e. from the GEWC Strategy, by adopting temporary special measures, similar to those applied at the United Nations, to achieve

⁴¹ [ICC/AI/2024/002](#).

ENABLERS

The effective implementation of the Strategy relies not only on substantive actions but also on a set of institutional enablers that create the conditions for sustained progress. These enablers, introduced for the first time in this Strategy, strengthen the systems, processes and organizational culture needed to support gender-equality efforts across the Court. Their inclusion draws on good practices from other UN system strategies – particularly those that embed enabling conditions to ensure strategic coherence, such as the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) and the UN Gender Parity Strategy. By reinforcing coordination, communication, monitoring and institutional learning, these enablers provide the structural foundations that allow the Court to advance a coherent, aligned and resilient approach to gender equality and an enabling environment over the Strategy’s four-year lifespan.

25

Strengthen internal communication to ensure transparency and inclusion across the Court [ICC Strategic Objective 6.4]⁴²

The Court recognizes that effective internal communication is essential to fostering transparency, cohesion and a shared understanding of strategic priorities at all levels of the institution. Strengthening communication practices is a vital step in promoting staff engagement, improving morale and cultivating a unified organizational culture. Effective internal communication enables the Court to respond proactively to emerging challenges and adapt swiftly to changing circumstances. Maintaining an open and inclusive dialogue across the institution enables early identification of issues, the solicitation of diverse perspectives and the building of broad consensus on solutions. The full integration of gender-responsive communication is fundamental to this effort, as it ensures that the conditions for an enabling environment are accessible to the entire workforce. These practices underpin a professional environment grounded in transparency, collaboration and shared purpose. The Court is currently working on developing its Internal Communication Strategy to strengthen internal communication and boost inclusion.

⁴² ICC Strategic Plan (2026-2029), Strategic Objective 6.5: “Strengthen internal communication to ensure transparency and alignment across the Court, encouraging open dialogue, regular feedback loops, and staff engagement in key decision-making processes”.

26

Coordination across organs

The Court acknowledges that effective coordination across its organs contributes to the creation of an enabling environment through greater coherence, shared understanding and consistency in approaches to gender equality. Strengthening cross-organ dialogue can support the exchange of perspectives, help identify common challenges and encourage complementary efforts across the institution. By fostering regular interaction and collaboration, the Court can better align initiatives, promote mutual learning and create opportunities to reinforce progress across multiple areas of work. Continued attention to coordination helps ensure that different parts of the Court are informed by one another’s experiences and are able to work towards shared objectives in a more integrated manner.

27

Maintain robust monitoring and reporting practices

The Court recognizes the value of sound monitoring and reporting practices in developing a clearer understanding of institutional progress, highlighting areas that may benefit from further attention and supporting a culture of reflection and continuous learning. Improved monitoring can help illuminate trends, surface emerging issues and inform decision-making across organs in a way that is responsive to the Court’s evolving needs. Within this broader framework, the reporting undertaken by the FPGE contributes to visibility and coherence in the Court’s gender-related efforts. Regular reporting on the implementation of the Strategy to the SWEC provides opportunities to share observations, identify patterns and encourage cross-institutional dialogue. In addition, contributions to the Court’s reporting in the annual reports on human resources submitted to the Committee on Budget and Finance will support transparency and help situate gender-related developments within the wider institutional context.

28

Foster knowledge-sharing and the exchange of best practices

Throughout the implementation of the Strategy, organs and sections will be encouraged to share experiences, lessons learned and good practices related to gender equality, inclusion and workplace culture through the SWEC. This enabler supports greater coherence and collaboration across the Court by facilitating opportunities for

cross-organ dialogue, informal exchanges and thematic discussions that enhance collective understanding and enable alignment of approaches. By using the SWEC as a central forum for transparency, institutional learning and mutual support, the Court can promote consistency in the implementation of gender-related initiatives and foster a culture of continuous improvement. The FPGE will also prioritize exchanges with external entities, including the UN Women Community of Practice and other networks such as International Gender Champions.

ANNEX 1.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASP	Assembly of States Parties
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
DJS	Division of Judicial Services
FMU	Facilities Management Unit
FPGE	Focal Point for Gender Equality
GRGB	Geographical representation and gender balance
GBV	Gender-based violence
GEEE	Gender Equality and Enabling Environment
GSS	General Services Section
HRS	Human Resources Section
ICC	International Criminal Court
IER	Independent Expert Review
IOM	Independent Oversight Mechanism
IOR	Immediate Office of the Registrar
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
LSS	Language Services Section
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
OTP	Office of the Prosecutor
RM	Review Mechanism
SUC	Staff Union Council
UN	United Nations
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SWEC	Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Committee
SSS	Security and Safety Section (ICC Registry)
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

ANNEX 2.

IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
PRIORITY 1: Gender-responsive, safe and inclusive processes				
1	Promote implementation of the ICC regulatory and disciplinary frameworks to address prohibited conduct.	Ongoing	■ Registry Legal Office, with the support of the Presidency, the Immediate Office of the Prosecutor ■ IOM	■ IOM annual reports ■ HR annual reports
2	Implement the FAIR Framework and establish the ethics function.	2027-Establishment of the ethics function	■ IOR	■ Implementation of IER recommendations ■ SWEC
3	Promote workplace well-being at the Court.	Ongoing	■ Principals ■ OHU ■ SWEC	■ HRS reports ■ SWEC
4	Deliver mandatory training for ICC personnel on gender, inclusion and diversity, on policies relating to disciplinary proceedings, on rights and duties of personnel and on mechanisms of internal justice relating to prohibited conduct and retaliation.	Ongoing	■ FPGE (for the gender training programme) ■ HRS (for training on prohibited conduct)	■ HR annual reports ■ FPGE periodic reports

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
5	Develop and adopt gender-disaggregated data collection in the IOM's reporting process to collect information on matters of alleged prohibited conduct relating to any form of perceived discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, or abuse of authority.	Q4 2027- Disaggregated data on gender to be included in IOM annual reports on alleged prohibited conduct	■ IOM	■ IOM annual reports
6	Integrate core values into daily operations by incorporating integrity, fairness, accountability and inclusion into operational procedures, decision-making processes, recruitment and performance evaluations.	Ongoing	■ Principals (with their immediate offices)	■ HR annual reports ■ Reporting on the implementation of IER recommendations ■ SWEC
7	Promote an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTIQIA+ persons within the Court.	Ongoing	■ FPGE ■ SUC	■ FPGE periodic reports ■ SWEC
8	Promote the integration of gender and inclusion perspectives in policies and guidance documents.	Ongoing	■ FPGE	■ FPGE periodic reports ■ SWEC

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
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PRIORITY 2: Gender-equitable work-life balance

9	Promote consistent consideration of the AI on Flexible Working Arrangements.	Throughout the implementation of the Strategy	■ Principals ■ Managers ■ HR	■ HR annual report
10	Ensure implementation of the ICC Parental Leave and Family Leave Policy.	Ongoing	■ Principals ■ Managers	■ HR annual report ■ SUC
11	Follow the progress of the Joint Committee on Legal Aid's work under the Legal Aid Policy to the extent that it pertains to conditions of service.	January 2027- Follow up on the findings of DJS and the Joint Committee on Legal Aid, including on the finalization of a protocol on the management of complaints	■ DJS	■ HR annual reports
12	Review the ICC Guideline for Breastfeeding to uphold international standards.	Q4 2026- Review of the Guideline for Breastfeeding	■ Principals ■ Managers ■ FPGE ■ OHU ■ HRS	■ HR annual reports ■ FPGE periodic report
13	Promote awareness surrounding menopause in line with international best practices.	Q3-2028	■ OHU ■ FPGE ■ SUC	■ FPGE periodic report
14	Develop gender-responsive knowledge products to support managers in creating an enabling environment.	Q3-2027	■ FPGE ■ HRS ■ SUC	■ FPGE periodic reports ■ SUC reports ■ HR reports

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
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15	Launch a Court-wide campaign to promote the main themes underpinning this Priority.	Q4-2026	■ FPGE	■ FPGE periodic reports
PRIORITY 3: Gender parity, diversity and inclusive leadership				
16	Improve inclusion and diversity within the Court by implementing targeted recruitment strategies, ensuring equitable opportunities for all staff.	Ongoing	■ HRS	■ HR annual report ■ Reporting on the implementation of IER recommendations
17	Further develop the mentorship programme aimed at inclusively empowering staff by providing them with tailored mentoring opportunities focusing on professional development, leadership training and career guidance.	Ongoing	■ HRS	■ HR annual report ■ Reporting on the implementation of IER recommendations
18	Develop a staff mobility framework for the Court across all organs.	Ongoing	■ HRS	■ HR annual report
19	Step up ongoing efforts regarding the language and key components of job descriptions and vacancy announcements to ensure they are gender-neutral and inclusive.	Ongoing	■ HRS ■ FPGE ■ LSS	■ HR annual report ■ FPGE periodic reports

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
20	Ensure that onboarding/ induction sessions are provided to all ICC staff, interns and visiting professionals, including sessions on gender awareness, policies regarding harassment and disciplinary proceedings, rights and duties of personnel and mechanisms of internal justice	Ongoing	- HRS - FPGE - IOM - SUC - OHU - Staff Counsellor Ombuds	- HR annual report - FPGE periodic reports
21	Enhance the collection of gender-disaggregated data on departing personnel, in particular regarding workplace culture concerns and recommendations.	By Q2 2027	HRS	HR annual report
22	Use recruitment screening mechanisms.	By the end of 2029 – Exploration of potential screening tools	- SSS - IOM	IOM annual reports
23	Continue to pursue efforts regarding external staff mobility through the consistent operationalization of the Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances.	Ongoing	- Principals - Managers	HR annual report
24	Monitor and ensure implementation of the ICC AI on Temporary Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Parity and the AI on Staff Selection.	By Q1 of 2028- Implementation of the policy	- Principals - Managers - HRS	- HR annual report - Reporting on the implementation of IER recommendations

	COMPONENT	TIMELINE	ICC ENTITIES IN THE LEAD	REPORTING MECHANISMS
ENABLERS				
25	Strengthen internal communication to ensure transparency and inclusion across the Court	Throughout the implementation of the Strategy	- Principals - Managers	HR annual report
26	Coordination across organs	Throughout the implementation of the Strategy	- Immediate Offices of the Principals - FPGE - HRS	SWEC meetings
27	Maintain robust monitoring and reporting practices	Throughout the implementation of the Strategy	- Immediate Offices of the Principals - HRS - FPGE	- SWEC reporting HRS reports - FPGE reports
28	Foster knowledge-sharing and the exchange of best practices	Throughout the implementation of the Strategy	- Immediate Offices of the Principals - SWEC - FPGE - HRS - SUC	- SWEC reporting HRS reports - FPGE reports

ANNEX 3.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abuse of authority⁴³

Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is particularly serious when a person uses his or her influence, power or authority to improperly influence the career or employment conditions of another, including, but not limited to, appointment, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation, recruitment, selection, working conditions or promotion. Abuse of authority may also include conduct that creates a hostile or offensive work environment which includes, but is not limited to, the use of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

Discrimination⁴⁴

Discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristic or trait. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.

Diversity⁴⁵

Diversity in the workplace refers to the similarities and differences that exist between people and that can impact employment and business opportunities

and outcomes. Diversity refers not only to similarities and differences linked to personal characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression and sex characteristics, socioeconomic background, age and disability, but also similarities and differences such as values, workstyles, caring responsibilities and work roles. Under an intersectional approach, each person has multiple groups they identify with, or of which they have lived experience, which can change over time.

Gender and sex⁴⁶

"Sex" refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics used to define the understanding of females and males. Under article 7(3) of the Rome Statute ("Statute"), "gender" is understood as the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society. Gender refers to sex characteristics and to social constructs and criteria used to define maleness and femaleness, including roles, behaviours, activities and attributes. As a social construct, gender varies within societies and from society to society and can change over time. This understanding of gender is in accordance with article 21 of the Statute.

Gender equality vs gender equity⁴⁷

Gender equality refers to equal rights, opportunities and socioeconomic resources available to all genders and sexes in a specific context or society. Gender equality at the ICC is understood as

encompassing matters related to gender identity, sexual orientation, gender expression and sex characteristics, and therefore also covers all the dimensions of the LGBTQI+ communities. Where gender or sex-based inequalities exist, it often is because women, LGBTQI+ persons and gender-diverse individuals are excluded or disadvantaged in relation to decision-making, career development and other opportunities. Gender equity is the process of being fair to the genders and sexes that are disadvantaged in a specific context; equity thus requires strategies and actions to compensate for historically and socially imprinted disadvantages, in order to establish substantive equality. Equity is therefore the intentional movement that leads to equality.

Gender parity⁴⁸

Gender parity is another term for equal representation of women and men in a given area, for example, gender parity in organizational leadership or higher education. Working towards gender parity (equal representation) is a key part of achieving gender equality, and one of the twin strategies adopted, alongside gender mainstreaming.

Harassment⁴⁹

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassing behaviour may be an isolated incident or may occur repeatedly. It need not be habitual. It is not the intention

of the harasser that defines whether a particular type of conduct constitutes harassment. Harassment may take many forms, including but not limited to words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another. Harassment may be directed at one or more persons based on a shared characteristic or trait as set out in the definition of discrimination.

Inclusion⁵⁰

Inclusion refers to the experiences people have in the workplace with others, and the extent to which they feel valued for who they are, the skills and experience they bring and whether they feel engaged with others at work. A person's feeling of inclusion at work can be influenced by their personal characteristics, their own behaviour and that of others, and the environment they are in. Creating an inclusive workplace culture and environment enables all employees to experience equality, supports empowerment, increases employee engagement and positively influences business performance.

Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership is defined through principles, attributes and expected behaviours across system-wide frameworks. The UN System Leadership Framework, developed under the auspices of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), states that UN Leadership is "inclusive and respectful of all personnel and stakeholders, embracing diversity and rejecting discrimination

⁴³ [ICC/AI/2022/003](#).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ ILO, [Transforming enterprises through diversity and inclusion](#), 2022.

⁴⁶ GEWC Strategy, p. 12.

⁴⁷ GEWC Strategy, p. 13.

⁴⁸ UN Women Training Centre eLearning Campus, [Gender Equality Glossary](#).

⁴⁹ [ICC/AI/2022/003](#).

⁵⁰ ILO, [Transforming enterprises through diversity and inclusion report](#), 2022.

in all its forms”.⁵¹ It is also principled, norm-based, accountable, collaborative and transformational. The Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System highlight that leadership at all levels is essential to creating safe, respectful and inclusive workplaces that eradicate bias and discrimination. This situates inclusive leadership as a practical enabler of gender equality, ethical conduct and staff well-being.

Intersectional approach⁵²

Gender is only one element that allows for a proper understanding of the broader sociocultural context being analysed. Intersectionality recognizes that people’s identities and social positions are shaped by several factors, the intersection of which can lead to unique forms of discrimination or oppression. In addition to gender, these factors can include: race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression and sex characteristics, socioeconomic background, age, disability, etc. Intersectionality allows for a more in-depth and complex understanding of the different experiences and challenges that are at play for specific groups of individuals in a given context and at a specific time, and further allows for the identification of specific actions that can be taken in order to counteract and eliminate these challenges.

ICC personnel

For the purposes of this Strategy, “ICC personnel” means staff and non-staff members of the ICC, i.e. any person holding a letter of appointment under the Staff Rules and/or Regulations,

⁵¹ United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), United Nations System Leadership Framework. Available at: <https://unscebg.org/topics/leadership>

⁵² GEWC Strategy, p. 12.

counsel (as defined in article 1 of the Code of Professional Conduct for counsel and including legal advisers within the meaning of rule 74(10) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence) and members of their teams, and individuals who are not elected officials, staff members or counsel but who are performing services in a direct or other agreed relationship with the Court not involving a letter of appointment under the Staff Rules and/or Regulations (including consultants, individual contractors, interns and visiting professionals).

Retaliation⁵³

Retaliation means any direct or indirect detrimental action or inaction that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of an individual, where such action has been recommended, threatened or taken for the purpose of punishing, intimidating or injuring an individual because that individual engaged in a protected activity.⁵⁴

Safe workplace⁵⁵

Safety at the workplace comprises all the values, attitudes, rules, managerial systems and practices, participatory principles and working behaviours that are conducive to creating a safe and healthy working environment – a place where people can work with a high degree of quality and productivity.

Sexual exploitation⁵⁶

⁵³ [Presidential Directive on Protection Against Retaliation \(ICC/PRESG/G/2024/001\)](#).

⁵⁴ A “protected activity” is defined in section 4 of the Presidential Directive on Protection Against Retaliation ([ICC/PRESG/G/2024/001](#)).

⁵⁵ ILO definition from “[Facts on SafeWork](#)”.

⁵⁶ [ICC/AI/2023/001](#).

Sexual exploitation is defined as “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another person”.⁵⁷ Sexual exploitation includes transactional sex and solicitation for transactional sex, trafficking and prostitution as well as any kind of exploitative relationships.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as “actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions”. Sexual abuse is a broad term which includes but is not limited to rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with a minor, child pornography, child prostitution, sexual slavery and forced marriage.⁵⁸

Sexual harassment⁵⁹

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. (i) While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered. (ii) Sexual harassment is the manifestation of a culture of discrimination and privilege based on

⁵⁷ [ICC/AI/2023/001](#), Section 2.1.

⁵⁸ [ICC/AI/2023/001](#), Section 2.2.

⁵⁹ [ICC/AI/2022/003](#).

unequal gender relations and other power dynamics. Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal or nonverbal and physical or non-physical nature, including written and electronic communications. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the same or different genders, and individuals of any gender can be either the affected individuals or the alleged offenders. Sexual harassment may occur outside the workplace and outside working hours, including during official travel or social functions related to work. Sexual harassment may be perpetrated by any colleague, including a supervisor, a peer or a subordinate. An offender’s status as a supervisor or a senior official may be treated as an aggravating circumstance. Sexual harassment may also constitute sexual exploitation or abuse under the provisions of the Court’s policy on prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, when available.



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