

STATEMENT: LCW DEMANDS THE IMMEDIATE SURRENDER OF OSAMA NJEEM TO THE ICC

Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) expresses its profound concern regarding the persistent failure of the Libyan authorities to implement the International Criminal Court (ICC) arrest warrants. The case of Osama Njeem starkly illustrates the absence of genuine political will to engage with international justice mechanisms, against the backdrop of a domestic judiciary that lacks independence and remains subject to political calculations that obstruct accountability for those responsible for grave crimes and serious human rights violations.

LCW has closely followed the statement¹ issued by the Office of the Libyan Attorney General on 9 July 2025, which announced that Osama Njeem, Director of Mitiga Prison, had appeared for questioning last April following the lifting of his immunity. This development occurred in the context of the arrest warrant issued by the ICC on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity². The statement further noted that the Attorney General's Office is taking steps to request evidence from the ICC.

LCW regards this statement as clear evidence of the failure of the Libyan judicial authorities to fulfil their fundamental mandate to investigate, ensure accountability, and prosecute those responsible for gross human rights violations. It also highlights the inability of the Attorney General's Office to pursue leaders of armed groups who continue to enjoy protection and support.

Moreover, the decision by the Ministry of Justice of the Government of National Unity (GNU) to retract its statement rejecting the implementation of the international arrest warrant against Njeem, only hours after its publication, starkly demonstrates the absence of a unified stance within Libyan state institutions concerning the country's international obligations.

Such inaction represents an extension of the deeply entrenched culture of impunity in Libya, where leaders of armed groups are effectively shielded from accountability, thereby emboldening the continuation of violations and eroding victims' confidence in the possibility of achieving justice.

¹ [Circular of the Libyan Attorney General's Office regarding the appearance of Osama Njeim for investigation.](#) (Facebook). Office of the Libyan Attorney General. 9 July 2025.

² [Situation in Libya: Arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court against Osama Al-Masri Njeem on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes.](#) ICC. 22 January 2025.

LCW underscores that victims and their families hold inalienable rights, including the right to know the truth, to secure justice, and to obtain reparations. The delay in surrendering individuals sought by the ICC constitutes a flagrant violation of these rights. Furthermore, the claim that the national judiciary is capable of prosecuting Njeem stands in stark contrast to the reality on the ground, as the Libyan judiciary demonstrably lacks the basic standards of independence and effectiveness and cannot credibly be considered an adequate alternative to international justice. This directly undermines the "principle of complementarity" and justifies the ICC's intervention.

LCW emphasises that although Libya is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, it remains under a binding obligation to fully cooperate with the ICC, under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970 (2011), as well as under the GNU's acceptance of the ICC's jurisdiction.³ The failure to implement arrest warrants represents a manifest breach of these obligations. The Libyan authorities have previously disregarded 10 other⁴ arrest warrants issued by the ICC, revealing a broader pattern of non-compliance that fundamentally threatens the effectiveness of the international justice system.

In light of the foregoing, Libya Crimes Watch (LCW) makes the following recommendations:

- LCW calls upon the Libyan authorities to execute the arrest warrants issued by the ICC, foremost among them the warrant against Njeem, to immediately surrender all individuals subject to ICC arrest warrants, and to guarantee full cooperation with the ICC in line with Libya's international obligations.
- LCW urges the ICC and States Parties to the Rome Statute to actively monitor the implementation of the Court's arrest warrants and to exert both legal and diplomatic pressure to ensure that the Libyan authorities comply with their duty to surrender those wanted by the ICC.
- LCW further calls upon the ICC to reassess the applicability and effectiveness of the "principle of complementarity", as outlined in Article 17 of the Rome Statute, in view of the continued inability of the Libyan national judiciary to undertake independent and effective measures to hold perpetrators of serious human rights violations accountable.

³ [Libya accepts ICC jurisdiction over alleged crimes from 2011 to the end of 2027](#). ICC. 15 May 2025.

⁴ [Situation in Libya](#). ICC. Retrieved 15 July 2025.