



E-Reporter - ICC Revision Project, Its Impact on Women and Africans

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AFLA's last E-Reporter "ICC Alert: Registrar's Questionable Revision Project" [click here](#) has triggered comments and discussion from various quarters, and has resulted in the establishment of a core group of CSO representatives to scrutinize the Revision project. Women and Africans are woefully affected by Revision hence the need for a core group composed of Women led and African led CSOs.

Results of a recent study conducted by the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice reviewing the gender and geographical representation at the ICC Registry in the context of Revision are alarming. For more than a decade the Women's Initiatives has issued the Gender Report Card monitoring the Court's compliance of its statutory requirements for gender and geographical balance. The 2015 study reveals an unprecedented regression in gender representation and a lack of diversity in the senior leadership and management positions of the Registry [click here](#).

What is more, the results of the study show that a disproportionately high percentage of professional positions abolished were posts held by Africans. As such the Africa region and nationals of states from this region are most affected by the Revision project. When one considers that Africa represents the largest regional block among ICC State Parties, and that States from the Africa region are the only ones that have referred cases to the Court, it is difficult to understand why Revision appears to target Africans unfairly, and in violation of the ICC statutory requirements.

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ICC Registrar, Herman von Hebel © flickr (<https://www.flickr.com/>)

ICC President Judge Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi © ICC-CPI

An argument for Revision is supposedly to cut down on costs and promote efficiency. Yet, the proposed Budget for 2016 presented by the Registrar to The Hague Working Group of the ICC rather reveals an increase of 22.66 million Euros. Of this, 16.91 million Euros - 74.6% of the increased budget is earmarked for the Registry alone. Where is the value of Revision one might ask.

A number of ICC Judges concerned about the legality and desirability of the Revision project called on the Presidency of the Court to suspend the project pending a satisfactory assessment. The Presidency sent a response weeks later and only after other interventions. The response was merely an administrative overview and does not address the real concerns expressed by the concerned judges. Noteworthy too is the fact that the document's breakdown of affected staff, lumps professional staff, staff for both established positions and those providing general and temporary assistance together. Such a breakdown misleads.

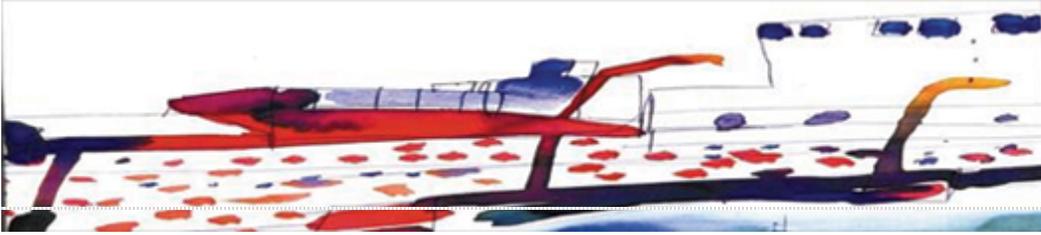
It is difficult to understand why the Presidency did not address the concerns of their fellow judges, but rather relied on the information provided by the Registrar. It would be desirable for the Presidency to address the specific concerns raised by their peers.

For the first time in the Court's history, the Court is presided over by a female, Judge Sylvia Fernandez de Gurmendi. As well, the First and Second Vice Presidents are female, an all female Presidency. Why are the leading women not addressing the gender and geographical gap in the Revision project?

At the end of the day, the Revision project is not only a problem for Women and Africans it is a problem affecting the people who work for the ICC, the Institution. Revision is a challenge to the International Criminal Court and must be addressed urgently to safeguard the Court's integrity. It is also the responsibility of the Assembly of State Parties not to accept wholesale the questionable Revision Project and its deficient outcomes.

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