

Rome Statute

Crimes and Jurisdiction

Article 1

It shall be a permanent institution and shall have the power to exercise its jurisdiction over persons for the most serious crimes of international concern, as referred to in this Statute, and shall be complementary to national criminal jurisdictions.

Article 5

The jurisdiction of the Court shall be limited to the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole. The Court has jurisdiction in accordance with this Statute with respect to the following crimes:

- (a) The crime of genocide;
- (b) Crimes against humanity;
- (c) War crimes;
- (d) The crime of aggression.

The Court shall exercise jurisdiction over the crime of aggression once a provision is adopted... defining the crime and setting out the conditions under which the Court shall exercise jurisdiction with respect to this crime.

Crimes and Jurisdiction (cont.)

Article 6

“Genocide” means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such...

Article 7

“Crime against humanity” means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack...

Article 8

The Court shall have jurisdiction in respect of war crimes in particular when committed as part of a plan or policy or as part of a large-scale commission of such crimes.... “War crimes” means

- Grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949
- Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict, within the established framework of international law
- In the case of an armed conflict not of an international character, serious violations of article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949
- Other serious violations of the laws and customs applicable in armed conflicts not of an international character, within the established framework of international law

Crimes and Jurisdiction (cont.)

Article 12

The Court may exercise its jurisdiction if one or more of the following States are Parties to this Statute or have accepted the jurisdiction of the Court...

- The State on the territory of which the conduct in question occurred or, if the crime was committed on board a vessel or aircraft, the State of registration of that vessel or aircraft;
- The State of which the person accused of the crime is a national.”

Article 13

The Court may exercise its jurisdiction... if... a situation in which one or more of such crimes appears to have been committed is referred to the Prosecutor by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations

Article 15

The Prosecutor may initiate investigations proprio motu on the basis of information on crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court.... If the Prosecutor concludes that there is a reasonable basis to proceed with an investigation, he or she shall submit to the Pre-Trial Chamber a request for authorization of an investigation.... If the Pre-Trial Chamber, upon examination of the request and the supporting material, considers that there is a reasonable basis to proceed with an investigation, and that the case appears to fall within the jurisdiction of the Court, it shall authorize the commencement of the investigation

Admissibility

Article 17

A case is inadmissible where:

- The case is being investigated or prosecuted by a State which has jurisdiction over it, unless the State is unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution;
- The case has been investigated by a State which has jurisdiction over it and the State has decided not to prosecute the person concerned, unless the decision resulted from the unwillingness or inability of the State genuinely to prosecute;
- The person concerned has already been tried for conduct which is the subject of the complaint...
- The case is not of sufficient gravity to justify further action by the Court.

Nuremberg Principles

Article 27

This Statute shall apply equally to all persons without any distinction based on official capacity. In particular, official capacity as a Head of State or Government, a member of a Government or parliament, an elected representative or a government official shall in no case exempt a person from criminal responsibility under this Statute, nor shall it, in and of itself, constitute a ground for reduction of sentence.

Article 28

A military commander or person effectively acting as a military commander shall be criminally responsible for crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court committed by forces under his or her effective command and control, or effective authority and control as the case may be, as a result of his or her failure to exercise control properly over such forces, where:

- That military commander or person either knew or, owing to the circumstances at the time, should have known that the forces were committing or about to commit such crimes; and
- That military commander or person failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his or her power to prevent or repress their commission or to submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

[Similar provisions apply to “other superiors.”]

Nuremberg Principles (cont.)

Article 33

The fact that a crime within the jurisdiction of the Court has been committed by a person pursuant to an order of a Government or of a superior, whether military or civilian, shall not relieve that person of criminal responsibility unless:

- The person was under a legal obligation to obey orders of the Government or the superior in question;
- The person did not know that the order was unlawful; and
- The order was not manifestly unlawful.

Orders to commit genocide or crimes against humanity are manifestly unlawful.

Waiver of Immunity

Article 98

The Court may not proceed with a request for surrender or assistance which would require the requested State to act inconsistently with its obligations under international law with respect to the State or diplomatic immunity of a person or property of a third State, unless the Court can first obtain the cooperation of that third State for the waiver of the immunity.