

Victims and witnesses

[Arabic](#)

One of the great innovations of the Statute of the International Criminal Court and its Rules of Procedure and Evidence is the series of rights granted to victims. For the first time in the history of international criminal justice, victims have the possibility under the Statute to present their views and observations before the Court.

Participation before the Court may occur at various stages of proceedings and may take different forms. Although it will be up to the judges to give directions as to the timing and manner of participation.

[Participation](#) in the Court's proceedings will in most cases take place through a legal representative and will be conducted "in a manner which is not prejudicial or inconsistent with the rights of the accused and a fair and impartial trial".

The victim-based provisions within the Rome Statute provide victims with the opportunity to have their voices heard and to obtain, where appropriate, some form of [reparation](#) for their suffering. It is this balance between retributive and restorative justice that will enable the ICC, not only to bring criminals to justice but also to help the victims themselves obtain justice.