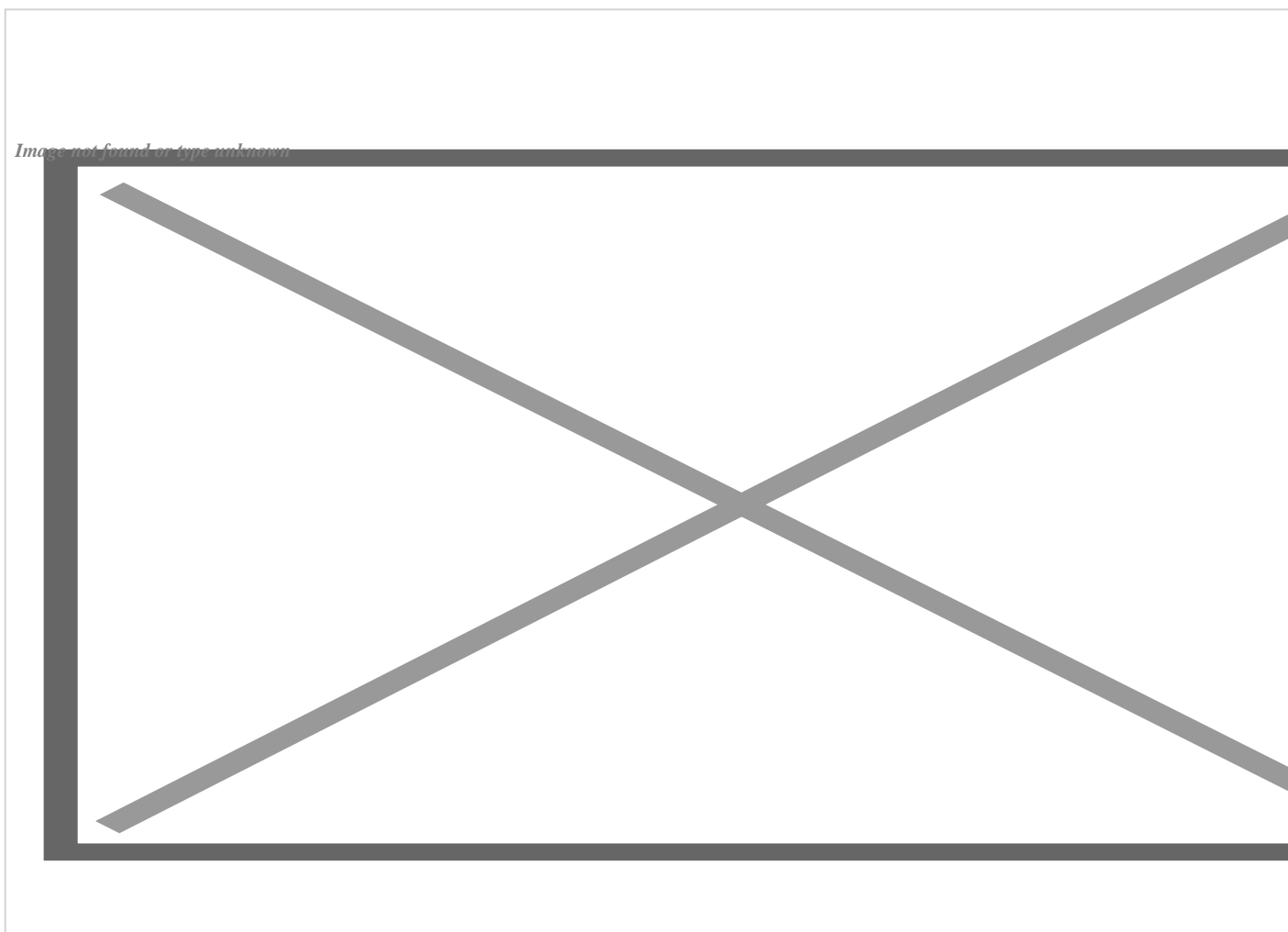


International Criminal Court condemns U.S. sanctions on officials



The Hague, September 3 (RHC)-- The International Criminal Court (ICC) has condemned "unprecedented" sanctions imposed by the United States on prosecutor Fatou Bensouda and one of her top aides in retaliation for a probe into alleged war crimes in Afghanistan.

The Hague-based tribunal said the sanctions announced by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo against Bensouda and another senior official, Phakiso Mochochoko, were "serious attacks" against the rule of law.

Pompeo announced the moves on Wednesday, saying that "the ICC continues to target Americans."

The ICC said in a statement the new measures "are another attempt to interfere with the Court's judicial and prosecutorial independence and crucial work to address grave crimes of concern to the international community."

The sanctions include a freeze on assets held in the U.S. or subject to U.S. law and target the two top judges.

The war crimes court said it "continues to stand firmly by its personnel and its mission of fighting impunity for the world's most serious crimes." The ICC will continue its probe into possible war crimes by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan.

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