

IMUN²²



HCC

The Prosecution v. Christopher Columbus

President:
Mariam Tabaa

Chair(s):
Faisal Nasrallah

Charges:

Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court hereby charges Christopher Columbus with the following offences under the Rome Statute

CHARGE 1: The defendant Christopher Columbus, has committed 3 accounts of Article 6; Genocide, which entail:

1. Killing members of the group: (a)
2. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group: (b)
3. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part: (c)

The defendant Christopher Columbus, pleads NOT GUILTY to this charge

CHARGE 2: The defendant Christopher Columbus, has committed 6 accounts of Article 7: Crimes Against Humanity, which entail:

1. Murder: (1) (a)
2. Extermination: (1) (b)
3. Enslavement: (1) (c)
4. Torture: (1) (f)
5. Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity: (1) (g)

The defendant Christopher Columbus, pleads NOT GUILTY to this charge

Given Information

Christopher Columbus was born in 1451 in the Republic of Genoa, part of what is now Italy. In his 20s he moved to Lisbon, Portugal, and later resettled in Spain, which remained his home base for the duration of his life. Columbus first went to sea as a teenager, participating in several trading voyages in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas. One such voyage, to the island of Khios, in modern-day Greece, brought him the closest he would ever come to Asia.

His first voyage into the Atlantic Ocean in 1476 nearly cost him his life as the commercial fleet he was sailing with was attacked by French privateers off the coast of Portugal. His ship was burned and Columbus had to swim to the Portuguese shore. He made his way to Lisbon, Portugal, where he eventually settled and married Filipa Perestrelo. The couple had one son, Diego, around 1480. His wife died soon after, and Columbus moved to Spain. He had a second son, Fernando, who was born out of wedlock in 1488 with Beatriz Enriquez de Arana. After participating in several other expeditions to Africa, Columbus gained knowledge of the Atlantic currents flowing east and west from the Canary Islands. Columbus continued his route and voyage to then discover the Americas.

According to older understanding, the “discovery” of the Americas was a great triumph, one in which Columbus accomplished four voyages, and bringing great material profit to Spain and to other European countries, and opening up the Americas to European settlement. The more recent perspective, however, has concentrated on the destructive side of the European conquest, emphasizing, for example, the disastrous impact of the slave trade and the ravages of imported disease on the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean region and the American continents. The sense of triumph has diminished accordingly, and the view of Columbus as hero has now been replaced, for many, by one of a man deeply flawed. While this second perception rarely doubts Columbus’s sincerity or abilities as a navigator, it emphatically removes him from his position of honour. Political activists of all kinds have intervened in the debate, further hindering the reconciliation of these disparate views. The Historical Criminal Court hereby accuses The Prosecutor V. Christopher Columbus of committing crimes against humanity during the European conquest of the Americas.

Helpful Sources

<https://www.history.com/news/columbus-day-controversy>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Christopher-Columbus>