



# The Holy See

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APOSTOLIC LETTER  
ISSUED *MOTU PROPRIO*

OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF  
FRANCIS

ON THE JURISDICTION OF JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES OF VATICAN CITY STATE  
IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

In our times, the common good is increasingly threatened by transnational organized crime, the improper use of the markets and of the economy, as well as by terrorism.

It is therefore necessary for the international community to adopt adequate legal instruments to prevent and counter criminal activities, by promoting international judicial cooperation on criminal matters.

In ratifying numerous international conventions in these areas, and acting also on behalf of Vatican City State, the Holy See has constantly maintained that such agreements are effective means to prevent criminal activities that threaten human dignity, the common good and peace.

With a view to renewing the Apostolic See's commitment to cooperate to these ends, by means of this Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio*, I establish that:

1. The competent Judicial Authorities of Vatican City State shall also exercise penal jurisdiction over:

a) crimes committed against the security, the fundamental interests or the patrimony of the Holy See;

b) crimes referred to:

- in Vatican City State Law No. VIII, of 11 July 2013, containing *Supplementary Norms on Criminal Law Matters*;

- in Vatican City State Law No. IX, of 11 July 2013, containing *Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code*;

when such crimes are committed by the persons referred to in paragraph 3 below, in the exercise of their functions;

c) any other crime whose prosecution is required by an international agreement ratified by the Holy See, if the perpetrator is physically present in the territory of Vatican City State and has not been extradited.

2. The crimes referred to in paragraph 1 are to be judged pursuant to the criminal law in force in Vatican City State at the time of their commission, without prejudice to the general principles of the legal system on the temporal application of criminal laws.

3. For the purposes of Vatican criminal law, the following persons are deemed “*public officials*”:

a) members, officials and personnel of the various organs of the Roman Curia and of the Institutions connected to it.

b) papal legates and diplomatic personnel of the Holy See.

c) those persons who serve as representatives, managers or directors, as well as persons who even *de facto* manage or exercise control over the entities directly dependent on the Holy See and listed in the registry of canonical juridical persons kept by the Governorate of Vatican City State;

d) any other person holding an administrative or judicial mandate in the Holy See, permanent or temporary, paid or unpaid, irrespective of that person’s seniority.

4. The jurisdiction referred to in paragraph 1 comprises also the administrative liability of juridical persons arising from crimes, as regulated by Vatican City State laws.

5. When the same matters are prosecuted in other States, the provisions in force in Vatican City State on concurrent jurisdiction shall apply.

6. The content of article 23 of Law No. CXIX of 21 November 1987, which approves the *Judicial Order of Vatican City State* remains in force.

This I decide and establish, anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

I establish that this Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio will be promulgated by its publication in

L'Osservatore Romano, entering into force on **1 September 2013**.

*Given in Rome, at the Apostolic Palace, on **11 July 2013**, the first of my Pontificate.*

**FRANCISCUS**

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