



Coalition for the  
International  
Criminal Court

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## **International Criminal Court Celebrates First Year**

*All Senior Officials Elected; Building Up Staff and Court Premises Continues*

**(New York, July 1, 2003)** – The International Criminal Court (ICC) today celebrates the one year anniversary of the commencement of its jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Since the July 1, 2002 entry into force of the court's treaty, the Rome Statute, the ICC has seen the adoption of its primary governing instruments and the election of all of its senior officials.

“Though our world continues to suffer from terrible wars and acts of terrorism, we can all celebrate the one year anniversary of the new International Criminal Court,” said William Pace, convenor of the NGO Coalition for the ICC. “Though the ICC is just getting started, within a few years it will become one of the great institutions of peace and justice in international affairs,” he added.

Under the direction of the now 90 countries to have ratified the Rome Statute, the work of building up the world's first permanent, independent and international criminal court began swiftly last year with the adoption of numerous legal instruments governing the court's operations. These documents include a budget for the first financial period, the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, the Elements of Crimes, the Financial Regulations and Rules, the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities and the Basic Principles Governing a Headquarters Agreement between the ICC and the Netherlands.

In The Hague, the Netherlands, where the ICC is based, an advance team of personnel opened the doors of a provisional office on July 1, 2002. In October 2002, a Division of Common Services took up the work of developing the financial, technological, administrative and other infrastructures necessary for the court's continued expansion. In February 2003, the 90 member Assembly of States Parties elected the ICC's first 18 judges, who were then sworn in during the ICC's Inaugural Session in March. In April, its first chief Prosecutor, Mr. Luis Moreno Ocampo of Argentina, was elected. In June, Mr. Moreno Ocampo was sworn in and, during a plenary meeting of the judges, Mr. Bruno Cathala of France became the final senior official elected when he received a unanimous vote to serve as Registrar. Mr. Cathala will take office following a swearing in ceremony this Thursday, July 3.

The court continues its search for highly qualified professionals from around the world to complete its staffing. It also moves forward its work of formalizing policies, regulations and procedures; many of these duties which will fall under the purview of the soon to be established office of the Registrar. Furthermore, the ICC will complete construction of its premises in the building of a court room, pre-trial chamber room, media center, library and public gallery. While construction is not expected to be completed until summer 2004, the Netherlands as Host State will provide a provisional court room for before that time if necessary.

With the Prosecutor and a small number of his senior staff members instated, the office of the Prosecutor has already begun the process of examining the more than 400 situations referred to the court since it opened its doors on this day last year. He is expected to make his first report shortly.

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