



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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Global Coalition Urges Egypt to Join International Criminal Court

Says Country Should Heed the Call from NAM to Support Court as 2010 Review Conference Approaches

Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)—an international network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations—today called on Egypt to demonstrate its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC is the first permanent, global court capable of trying individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Egypt signed the Statute on 26 December 2000.

Egypt is the May 2009 country target for the Coalition's Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a monthly push to secure a new ICC member state.

In a 6 May 2009 letter to the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mohammed Hosni Mubarak, the CICC urged the government to join the Court without delay. The Coalition referenced the recent adoption of the Final Outcome document from the ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) of 118 developing

countries in late April that called upon its members to consider joining the Court if they have not already done so. Egypt is a founding member of NAM.

“Egypt plays a very influential role in the Arab and Islamic world,” said William Pace, Convenor of the Coalition for the ICC. “As the host of the Arab League that is pushing to lead by example, it should ratify the Rome Statute as a matter of priority. We also urge Egypt to support the ICC in bringing justice to the victims just south of its border in Sudan.”

The Coalition’s letter applauded the support of Egypt and the League of Arab States in securing peace in Sudan, but urged against the inappropriate use of an Article 16 deferral by the UN Security Council because such a move would only delay justice for the victims.

“By joining the Court, Egypt has an opportunity to revitalize the rule of law and justice in the Arab world where the many victims of grave crimes deserve justice,” said Abeer Al-Khraisha, CICC Regional Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa.

In addition to the current investigations before the Court in four African countries, the ICC Office of the Prosecutor has analyzed the commission of grave crimes in Iraq. In addition, the ICC prosecutor is reviewing the declaration of the Palestinian National Authority alleging the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity by Israel, pursuant to Article 12(3) of the Rome Statute.

To date, countries from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are vastly under-represented at the Court. The Arab League, which includes 22 Arab states, has only three members that are states parties to the ICC – Jordan, Djibouti and the Comoros Islands.

“Egypt’s ratification of the Rome Statute would set an example for other Arab countries,” says Nasser Amin, Director of the Arab Centre for the Independence of the Judiciary and Legal Profession. “We commend the government’s involvement in the creation and effective functioning of the ICC since the 1998 Rome Conference, but the time has come to act on those promises and join the Court now.”

There are currently 108 ICC states parties. Central to the Court’s mandate is the principle of complementarity, which holds that the Court will only intervene if national legal systems are unable or unwilling to do so. There are currently four active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; and Uganda.
