



Coalition  
for the  
International  
Criminal Court

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **International Criminal Court States Parties Elect Candidate from The Gambia as Deputy Prosecutor**

*Ms. Fatou Bensouda Wins the Vote for ICC Deputy Prosecutor for Prosecutions*

**(The Hague, 8 September 2004)** – Ms. Fatou Bensouda of The Gambia today was elected as the International Criminal Court (ICC) Deputy Prosecutor for Prosecutions by an absolute majority vote of the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) to the Rome Statute of ICC which is meeting in The Hague this week. Ms. Bensouda, who has most recently served as Legal Adviser and Trial Attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), won the Deputy Prosecutor election in the first and only round of a secret ballot, securing 58 votes out of a total of 78 States votes.

“The appointment of the Deputy Prosecutor for Prosecutions completes the ICC’s team of distinguished senior officials. This election is welcomed by the NGO Coalition for the International Criminal Court and comes at an important moment in the ICC’s history,” said William Pace, Convenor of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) which includes over 2,000 civil society groups from around the world. CICC member Christian Hemedi, Chairperson of the Association for the Renewal of Human Rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, said, “In light of the first two cases which involve African countries, Ms. Bensouda’s invaluable experience as an attorney in The Gambia and at the ICTR will be a truly great asset to the Court now that investigations are underway.”

The Deputy Prosecutor for Prosecutions was selected from an initial pool of 198 applicants. From this group, the names of three final candidates – Nicola Crutchley of New Zealand, Josaia Naigulevu of Fiji and Ms. Bensouda – were submitted to the Assembly by ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo on 15 July 2004.

Ms. Bensouda began her work at the ICTR in 2002. Prior to that, she held a number of high-profile positions as a lawyer, prosecutor and government minister in The Gambia including serving as Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Solicitor General for the Republic of The Gambia and Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions for the Republic. She holds a Masters of Law degree in International Maritime Law in addition to her Barrister-At-Law degree and speaks Wolof, English and French.

Commenting on the importance of this election, Brigid Inder, Executive Director of the Women’s Initiative for Gender Justice based in The Hague, said, “Fatou Bensouda brings much-needed gender and regional integrity to the Office of the Prosecutor, and as Head of Prosecutions it will be her job to ensure that gender-based crimes and sexual violence are effectively prosecuted. I think too that Ms. Bensouda understands that for the Court to have any meaning, justice *must* belong to the people most affected by war and armed conflict.”

Ms. Bensouda will take up her new post on 1 November 2004. The Assembly voted that her term of office would be for nine years, the maximum term allowed under the Rome Statute. Ms. Bensouda will be working under the direction of ICC Prosecutor Moreno Ocampo of Argentina, who took up his post in June 2003, and in conjunction with the Deputy Prosecutor for Investigations, Serge Brammertz of Belgium, who began his work in November 2003.

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### **Note to the Editor:**

**The ICC press release and background information on the Assembly of States Parties can be found on the ICC’s website at:** [http://www.icc-cpi.int/third\\_session.html](http://www.icc-cpi.int/third_session.html)

**Press releases from CICC member organizations can be found on the CICC website at:**  
<http://www.iccnw.org/pressroom/membersmediastatements.html>