
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Introduction to the NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court (CICC)

In the late 80's and early 90's, only a handful of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had active programs supporting the establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC); fewer still were monitoring the deliberations at the United Nations. On February 10, 1995, these groups met in New York, formed the NGO Coalition for an International Criminal Court and established an informal Steering Committee. Amnesty International was among these groups. The World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy and its Executive Director, William R. Pace, were requested to serve as Secretariat and Convenor for the new network.

Since that time the Coalition has grown to include over 1000 NGOs from all regions of the world and many sectors of global civil society, including human rights, the rights of women and children, peace, international law, humanitarian assistance, the rights of victims, and religion. These groups are united in their support for a fair and effective permanent International Criminal Court (ICC) and have made a significant contribution at all stages of the process, from the Preparatory Committee to the Rome Conference and now at the UN Preparatory Commission on the ICC. As Reuters News Service reported after the Rome Conference:

“The enormous influence of NGOs inside the conference was one of the key features of the five-week Rome meeting. Many ‘like-minded’ countries would agree with the assessment...that without the NGOs there would never have been an agreement on a court, let alone a strong one with an independent, self-starting prosecutor.”

The current work of the Coalition has four over-arching elements:

- Promoting universal acceptance and ratification of the Rome Statute, including the adoption of comprehensive national implementing legislation
- Promoting education and awareness of the ICC and the Rome Statute at the national, regional and global level
- Supporting the successful completion of the mandates of the UN Preparatory Commission for the ICC and facilitating the effective participation of civil society and NGOs in the Preparatory Commission and related meetings
- Expanding and strengthening the Coalition and its global network

Some of the activities being undertaken in the pursuit of these goals include:

- Convening working groups and caucuses to focus on particular issues such as gender, children's issues, the particular needs of victims and the interests of faith-based groups

- Maintaining a World Wide Web page (www.iccnw.org) and a listserv to facilitate the exchange of NGO and expert documents and information (to subscribe e-mail: icc-info-subscribe@onelist.com).
- Producing and distributing educational materials such as an extensive newsletter, the ICC Monitor (issued 4-5 times per year - included in mailings from the International Justice Project); and a bi-monthly fax and e-mail bulletin, the ICC Update (sent to subscribers to the listserv)
- Promoting the ICC to government representatives, parliamentarians, civil society groups and the general public through individual outreach, the dissemination of materials and an international media campaign
- Helping to coordinate the work of NGOs and governments on domestic legislation to implement the ICC Statute
- Providing extensive services and coordination for the work of NGOs attending the Preparatory Commission and facilitating the involvement of NGOs from the Global South

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