



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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Global Coalition Calls on Brunei Darussalam to Join the International Criminal Court

Civil Society Says it Will be a Major Contribution to Justice and Peace in ASEAN and Asia-Pacific

New York/Manila—The Coalition for the International Criminal Court today called on Brunei Darussalam to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) as a way of contributing significantly to justice and peace not only in the ASEAN, but in the wider Asia-Pacific region. By acceding to the Rome Statute of the ICC—the world's first and only permanent international court to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide—Brunei Darussalam would join 121 other nations in the fight against impunity.

Brunei Darussalam is the focus of the Coalition's Universal Ratification Campaign (URC) for September 2012, a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Rome Statute—the ICC's founding treaty.

In a letter dated 4 September 2012 to Brunei Darussalam's Sultan, His Majesty Hassanal Bolkiah, the Coalition—a global network of more than 2,500 civil society organizations in 150 countries advocating for a fair, effective and independent ICC—urged the government of Brunei Darussalam to prioritize its accession to the Rome Statute.

Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Court this year, the Rome Statute came into force in July 2002 and now has the support of almost two-thirds of the world's

nations, with 121 states having ratified or acceded to the treaty. To date, 17 states in the Asia-Pacific region have recognized the jurisdiction of the ICC, and a number of countries, including Tonga, Tuvalu, Indonesia and Malaysia, are in advanced stages of their ratification processes. By joining the ICC, Brunei Darussalam would set an important example for states in the ASEAN and throughout the Asia-Pacific region that have yet to embrace the Rome Statute system.

“We are encouraged that a growing number of states in the Asia-Pacific region are moving forward in their ratification processes of the Rome Statute. Small- and middle-power nations, numbering nearly two-thirds of the UN, have recognized the great advantages of achieving universal ratification of this historic treaty and its links to achieving the peace and justice goals of the UN Charter,” said William R. Pace, convenor of the Coalition.

“This is the first time that Brunei Darussalam becomes a focus of the Coalition’s Universal Ratification Campaign. After the visit of ICC President Sang-Hyun Song to the country last year, we were encouraged by the prospects of Brunei taking positive steps to advance its role in the international community by joining the ICC,” said Evelyn Balais-Serrano, the Coalition’s regional coordinator for Asia-Pacific. “It will be a major contribution of Brunei Darussalam to ASEAN as well as to the world community if it decides to ratify soon. It will join Cambodia, the Philippines and Timor Leste, thus strengthening the voice within the ASEAN and the Asia-Pacific region,” she added.

As a state party, Brunei Darussalam would be able to actively participate in the annual Assembly of States Parties (ASP) of the ICC, during which states make important decisions in relation to the administration of the Court, including the election of judges and prosecutors.

Background: *The ICC is the world's first permanent international court to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Central to the Court's mandate is the principle of complementarity, which holds that the Court will only intervene if national legal systems are unwilling or unable to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. There are currently seven investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; Cote d'Ivoire; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda; Kenya; and Libya. The ICC has publicly issued 22 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. The Court issued a judgment in its first trial on 14 March 2012. Two other trials are ongoing. The ICC Office of the Prosecutor has also made public that it is conducting eight preliminary examinations on four continents: Afghanistan, Colombia, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Republic of Korea, Mali and Nigeria*

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court is a global network of civil society organizations in 150 countries working in partnership to strengthen international cooperation with the ICC; ensure that the Court is fair, effective and independent; make justice both visible and universal; and advance stronger national laws that deliver justice to victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. For more information, visit: www.coalitionfortheicc.org

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