

New York, 4 November 2014

*Your Excellency President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi
President of the Arab Republic of Egypt*

Re: Prospects for Accession to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Your Excellency,

We have the honor of writing to you on behalf of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations in 150 countries, campaigning for a fair, effective, and independent ICC and increased access to justice for victims of crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes. As the Convenor of global civil society organizations engaged in seeking justice under the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court, the Coalition is committed to advancing justice efforts in the Middle East and North Africa region during this time of change. We believe that in a post-revolution Egypt, the rationale for accession to the ICC strongly aligns with the new direction your administration pledged to take in 2014.

As you well know, Egypt signed the Rome Statute of the ICC on 26 December 2000, soon after the treaty was finalized on 17 July 1998. During the 1st cycle of the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) from 2008-2011, Egypt accepted the recommendations (made by Brazil and Chile) to consider ratifying the Rome Statute. On 6 March 2011, the Secretary General of the Arab League Nabil El Arabi, then Foreign Minister of Egypt expressed in a public official statement that ICC ratification would be a priority. Most recently, amendments to the Egyptian penal code have for the first time criminalized the crimes contained in the Rome Statute. The Coalition welcomes this development and encourages more measures supporting the transitional justice process, especially in the field of criminal justice reform. This is, particularly, timely as Egypt will be under review in the upcoming UPR in November 2014.

Today, the challenge for the Egyptian legislature is to take advantage of the opportunities created by the Rome system, a legal regime which has been widely accepted within the international community. By joining the ICC, Egypt can also have an important influence on other countries in the region to ensure universal acceptance of the Court, to gain a stronger voice within the world of global justice, and to participate in making the ICC a truly effective, international mechanism for justice and peace.

The Coalition takes this opportunity to reaffirm support for the regional civil society representatives, including the Egyptian and Arab Coalitions for the ICC undertaking campaigns to raise awareness on the ICC in Egypt and the region. As indicated by the Convenor of the Egyptian Coalition, Nasser Amin: "Egypt urgently needs to ratify the Rome Statute; ratification will

prevent future crimes against humanity and will greatly contribute to ending impunity for security authorities by guaranteeing a fair and independent judicial process.”¹

We hope to see you among the ICC states parties in the near future.

Sincerely,



Leila Hanafi
Middle East & North Africa Coordinator, Coalition for the International Criminal Court

CC:

H.E Mr. Ibrahim Mehleb, Prime Minister

H.E. Mr. Sameh Shoukry, Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Mr. Ibrahim El Heneidy, Ministry of Transitional Justice

H.E. Mr. Mahfouz Saber Abdel Kader, Minister of Justice

H.E. Mr. Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN

¹ Egyptian Coalition for the ICC official testimonial for the CICC Universal Ratification Campaign for Egypt, 2012.