

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

2 April 2014

Armenia: Ensure Justice for Victims by Joining ICC

Global Coalition urges constitutional amendment to allow for Rome Statute ratification

The Hague—Armenia can pay tribute to victims of past atrocities and ensure protection under the rule of law for future generations by joining the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Coalition for the ICC said today.

Throughout the month of April, Armenia is the focus of the Coalition's Campaign for Global Justice, which encourages states to join the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the only permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of graves crimes.

“International justice mechanisms such as the ICC seek to preserve the historic record regarding the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, yet they can also serve to prevent those crimes from happening again,” said **Tatevik Gharibyan of Civil Society Institute Armenia**. “We are hopeful that our government will ratify the Rome Statute as soon as possible. Armenia's membership would serve as a tribute to victims of the past and contribute to preventing the creation of new victims in the future.”

In a letter to President Serzh Sargsyan, the Coalition urged Armenia to take the necessary steps to join the 122 other states that are members of the ICC and help put an end to impunity.

Although Armenia signed the Rome Statute in 1999, its Constitutional Court ruled that the Statute was incompatible with the Armenian constitution in 2004.

“Ten years have passed since the Armenian Constitutional Court ruled on the incompatibility of the Rome Statute,” said **Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens, the Coalition's Regional Coordinator for Europe**. “For a decade now, Armenia has sadly been absent from the developing architecture of an international justice system that seeks to acknowledge and redress the sufferings of victims of mass atrocities.”

Late last year, a Commission for Constitutional Reform was established to consider amendments to the Armenian constitution.

“The current process of constitutional review provides a long-awaited opportunity for the government to ensure that amendments are made to pave the way for ratification of the Statute, and we look forward to seeing proposals to that end,” added **Meersschaert Duchens**.

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.

The Coalition 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. coalitionfortheicc.org.

CONTACTS**In The Hague:**

Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens
Head of the Hague Secretariat,
Regional Coordinator for Europe
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +31 70 311 1087
meersschaert@coalitionfortheicc.org

Niall Matthews

Head of Communications
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +31 70 311 1085
matthews@coalitionfortheicc.org

In New York:

Jelena Pia-Comella
Program Director
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +1 (646) 465-8524
pia@coalitionfortheicc.org

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

2 April 2014

Armenia: Ensure Justice for Victims by Joining ICC

Global Coalition urges constitutional amendment to allow for Rome Statute ratification

The Hague—Armenia can pay tribute to victims of past atrocities and ensure protection under the rule of law for future generations by joining the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Coalition for the ICC said today.

Throughout the month of April, Armenia is the focus of the Coalition's Campaign for Global Justice, which encourages states to join the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the only permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of graves crimes.

“International justice mechanisms such as the ICC seek to preserve the historic record regarding the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, yet they can also serve to prevent those crimes from happening again,” said **Tatevik Gharibyan of Civil Society Institute Armenia**. “We are hopeful that our government will ratify the Rome Statute as soon as possible. Armenia's membership would serve as a tribute to victims of the past and contribute to preventing the creation of new victims in the future.”

In a letter to President Serzh Sargsyan, the Coalition urged Armenia to take the necessary steps to join the 122 other states that are members of the ICC and help put an end to impunity.

Although Armenia signed the Rome Statute in 1999, its Constitutional Court ruled that the Statute was incompatible with the Armenian constitution in 2004.

“Ten years have passed since the Armenian Constitutional Court ruled on the incompatibility of the Rome Statute,” said **Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens, the Coalition's Regional Coordinator for Europe**. “For a decade now, Armenia has sadly been absent from the developing architecture of an international justice system that seeks to acknowledge and redress the sufferings of victims of mass atrocities.”

Late last year, a Commission for Constitutional Reform was established to consider amendments to the Armenian constitution.

“The current process of constitutional review provides a long-awaited opportunity for the government to ensure that amendments are made to pave the way for ratification of the Statute, and we look forward to seeing proposals to that end,” added **Meersschaert Duchens**.

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.

The Coalition 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. coalitionfortheicc.org.

CONTACTS**In The Hague:**

Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens
Head of The Hague Secretariat,
Regional Coordinator for Europe
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +31 70 311 1087
meersschaert@coalitionfortheicc.org

Niall Matthews

Head of Communications
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +31 70 311 1085
matthews@coalitionfortheicc.org

In New York:

Jelena Pia-Comella
Program Director
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +1 (646) 465-8524
pia@coalitionfortheicc.org