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**Egypt Must Affirm Its Commitment to Justice***Global Coalition urges Egypt to join the International Criminal Court*

**Rabat, Morocco/New York/The Hague**—Egypt should bolster its ongoing transitional justice process by acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Coalition for the ICC said today.

“The ongoing transitional justice process in Egypt is reigniting a crucial debate among transitional justice advocates as to the role that the ICC can play in delivering justice and redress to victims of grave crimes,” **said Leila Hanafi, the Coalition’s regional coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).**

In a letter dated 5 November to the president of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the Coalition acknowledged some promising steps taken by Egypt in the recent past, including statements of interest and commitment to joining the ICC made by government officials, as well as amendments to the Egyptian penal code which criminalize 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.

For the last two years, the Coalition has monitored developments in the country’s transitional justice process, including the drafting of the 2012 constitution, the parliamentary and presidential elections processes and the trial of former president Hosni Mubarak. Egypt will be under assessment during the Universal Periodic Review at the United Nations Human Rights Council this month. The government can signal its commitment to accountability and rule of law by taking steps to join the ICC.

“The commitment to accountability for any crimes that have violated the rights and freedoms of citizens cannot be overlooked,” **said Mahmoud Farouk, the executive director of the Egyptian Center for Public Policy Studies (ECPPE).** “Thus, the country can move forward and learn from periods of repressions that the Egyptian people have endured for more than half a century”

As the largest Arab country and an instrumental player in regional politics, Egypt is in a position to act as a leader for a region underrepresented at the ICC. Ratification of the Rome Statute would allow Egypt to participate as a state party in the sessions of the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) and shape the future of international criminal justice by participating in all negotiations and decisions of the ASP, including making proposals on any amendments to the Rome Statute.

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**BACKGROUND:** The ICC is the world’s first permanent international court to have jurisdiction over 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 unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of

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genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

There are currently nine active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic I & II; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, Sudan; Kenya; Libya; Uganda; Côte d'Ivoire and Mali. The ICC has publicly issued 31 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Two trials are ongoing. The Office of the Prosecutor has made public that it is examining nine situations on four continents, including Afghanistan, Colombia; the registered vessels of the Comoros, Greece and Cambodia; Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Iraq (examination re-opened in 2014), Nigeria and Ukraine. The Office of the Prosecutor has concluded preliminary examinations relating to Iraq, Venezuela, Palestine and the Republic of Korea, declining in each case to open an investigation.

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court is a global network of civil society organizations in over 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.

[www.coalitionfortheicc.org](http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org)

Experts from human rights organizations members of the Coalition are available for background information and comment. Contact: [communications@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:communications@coalitionfortheicc.org)