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1 July 2014

**New law shows Sweden's support for global justice***Sweden fulfils obligations as ICC member with legislation's entry into force today*

**The Hague/Stockholm**—The Coalition for the International Criminal Court and the United Nations Association of Sweden have welcomed the entry into force today of a new Swedish law criminalizing crimes against humanity as an important step in the global fight against impunity.

The new *Act on criminal responsibility for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes* makes widespread or systematic attacks against civilians—including murder, sexual abuse and torture—crimes against humanity.

“After more than ten years of preparation, the new Swedish legislation on war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide is highly welcome as it brings national legislation into accordance with international law,” said **Aleksander Gabelic, president of the United Nations Association of Sweden**. “Common crime definitions and harmonization of penalties and sentencing means more efficient jurisdiction,” he continued.

The law removes any statute of limitations for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity; provides for command responsibility; and authorizes Swedish courts to adjudicate cases concerning these crimes regardless where they have been committed or by whom—thus providing Sweden with universal jurisdiction.

It also provides clearer guidelines on the definition of war crimes, and introduces a new provision in the penal code on the crime of genocide that better adheres to the UN Genocide Convention.

“The Coalition for the ICC welcomes this essential step in strengthening the ability to maintain international peace and security,” said **Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens, Europe regional coordinator of the Coalition for the ICC**. “In enacting this legislation, Sweden has reaffirmed its commitment to international justice—to holding perpetrators of horrific mass atrocities to account, to acknowledging the suffering of victims, and to helping to end cycles of violence—wherever it is needed.”

Having joined the International Criminal Court (ICC) in June 2001, Sweden is a long-standing supporter of justice processes seeking to address these crimes on a global scale.

However, full and effective national legislation on the crimes over which the ICC has jurisdiction has been lacking until now.

Legislation that clearly defines genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity allows those crimes to be treated as such at the domestic level, so that if and when they occur, they are legally crimes in that state and can be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**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.

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