

The Hague / New York, 2 April 2014

H.E. Mr. Serzh Sargsyan

President of the Republic of Armenia-

Re: Armenia's Ratification of 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, advocating for a fair, effective, and independent Court as well as increased access to justice for victims of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

As part of its Universal Ratification Campaign for the month of April 2014, the Coalition is respectfully urging Armenia to expedite efforts to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Your Excellency, Armenia has demonstrated its support for the international justice system created by the Rome Statute on a number of occasions, starting with its active participation in the 1998 Rome Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court, followed by Armenia's signing of the Rome Statute on 1 October 1999.

Putting a true end to impunity however, requires a level of commitment evidenced only by the ratification and full implementation of the Rome Statute, as well as a proactive engagement with the international justice system to ensure that perpetrators are held to account wherever they may be.

Your Excellency, Armenia's vocal support for ending impunity has resonated in several fora. The acceptance of recommendations to ratify the Rome Statute made during the 8th session of the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review in May 2010 was echoed by Armenia's alignment with the statement made on behalf of the European Union at the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC later that year in December – a statement reaffirming the commitment to achieving universality of the Rome Statute.

Armenia's support of international justice was also made clear in Your Excellency's statement at the 66th UN General Assembly meeting in September 2011: *"We unequivocally welcome the clear position adopted by the international community in precluding any possibility of immunity or pardon for perpetrators of genocide or other crimes against humanity... Armenia will contribute its most to the recognition, punishment, and prevention of genocides."*¹

As recently as April of last year, your government demonstrated its interest in and support for the ICC by addressing a conference in Yerevan, entitled, *"Ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court by the Republic of Armenia: Problems and Process."* The attendance by Deputy Justice Minister Aram Orbelyan, Deputy Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, and former Minister of

¹ <http://gadebate.un.org/66/armenia>

Justice and current member of the National Assembly of Armenia, Davit Harutyunyan, was testament to Armenia's commitment to international justice.

We are fully aware that the Constitutional Court's ruling of 2004 remains a hurdle for ratification. For this reason, we encourage Your Excellency to ensure that the recently-established Commission for Constitutional Reform consider amendments necessary to remove the legal preconditions for ratification as stated in the Court's ruling, so that Armenia can soon proclaim its membership in this essential judicial institution.

Your Excellency, 122 states have joined the ICC, but only through universal acceptance of the Court can we ensure that justice is served for grave crimes no matter where they occur. Armenia's ratification of the Rome Statute is thus not only crucial for ensuring the global jurisdiction, legitimacy, and support for the Court but would also represent a firm commitment to eradicating the culture of impunity; advancing the principles of democracy, good governance, justice, and the rule of law; and ensuring justice for victims everywhere.

We hope to see you among the ICC States Parties in the near future.

Sincerely,



Jelena Pia-Comella
Program Director
Coalition for the ICC



Kirsten Meerschaert Duchens
Head of The Hague Secretariat,
Regional Coordinator for Europe
Coalition for the ICC

CC:

H.E. Mr. Tigran Sargsyan, Prime Minister

H.E. Mr. Edward Nalbandian, Minister of Foreign Affairs

H.E. Mr. Hrair Tovmasyan, Minister of Justice

H.E. Mr. Garen Nazarian, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the UN

H.E. Ms. Dziunik Aghajanian, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to The Netherlands

H.E. Mr. Avet Adonts, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Belgium

H.E. Mr. Charles Aznavour, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the UN Office in Europe

H.E. Ambassador Arman Kirakossian, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the OSCE

H.E. Mr. Armen Papikyan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the Council of Europe

H.E. Mr. Hovik Abrahamyan, President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia

Mr. Harutyunyan Gagik, President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia