

18 February 2015

Dear Excellency,

On behalf of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (the Coalition), a global network of over 2,500 non-governmental organizations in more than 150 countries advocating for a fair, effective and independent International Criminal Court (ICC), I am writing to call your attention to the upcoming ICC judicial election.

The Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute will elect one new judge at its resumed thirteenth 13th session, scheduled for 24-25 June 2015. The nomination period for candidates, exclusively from the Asia Pacific Region,¹ will run from 18 February to 31 March 2015.

As the Court's first trials are coming to an end and the Court proceeds into its second decade, the ICC and the Rome Statute system are moving into a new stage of development and scrutiny. As the scale and scope of international criminal justice expands, so too do the controversies and challenges confronting the ICC. A primary way for the ICC to be recognized in the world community as a truly independent and effective international tribunal that ensures fairness in its procedures and trials is for the ICC chambers to be composed of judges who are among the most highly respected, qualified and impartial. In order to deal with particularly complex legal proceedings and to make sure that the Court's judicial processes can be as efficient as possible, it is particularly important to our NGO members that judicial candidates have experience in criminal courtroom proceedings and courtroom management.

The Coalition calls on governments to fully respect the provisions set out in Article 36 of the Rome Statute when nominating candidates. The Coalition also encourages nominations to be made through a transparent and vigorous process, in broad consultation with civil society, professional national legal associations and others.

The Coalition as a whole does not endorse or oppose any individual candidates. However, to encourage States Parties to nominate and elect the most highly qualified, the Coalition undertakes a

¹ To ensure equitable geographical representation in the ICC's plenary of 18 Judges, a minimum voting requirement for the Asia-Pacific Region is in place for this election. States Parties from the Asia-Pacific region for the purpose of the Assembly of States Parties are: Fiji; Tajikistan; Marshall Islands; Nauru; Cyprus; Cambodia; Jordan; Mongolia; Timor-Leste; Samoa; Republic of Korea; Afghanistan; Japan; Cook Islands; Bangladesh; Philippines; Maldives; Vanuatu; and Palestine.

comprehensive elections campaign. This campaign remains one of the Coalition's most crucial to ensure a fair and effective ICC and ensure that the election of ICC officials is both **transparent and merit-based**.


As with previous elections, the Coalition will request all nominated candidates to complete questionnaires that provide additional information about their qualifications, hold interviews with all candidates, organize public seminars with available candidates and experts, as well as host public debates between the candidates. The Coalition hopes to make available recordings of the discussions. States Parties are strongly encouraged to study these materials and resources in making their voting decisions. The Coalition's campaign materials can be found at the following webpage: <http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/?mod=elections>.

The Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties has provided information on the nomination procedure and general information on the elections at the following webpage: http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/asp/sessions/documentation/13th-session-resumption/Pages/default.aspx

Excellency, the Coalition is also committed to supporting the work of the Advisory Committee on Nominations of Judges (ACN) in fulfilling its mandate and in its work to further improve the ICC judicial elections process. The ACN is entirely independent from the Coalition for the ICC and was established in accordance with Article 36(4)(c) of the Rome Statute to facilitate the nomination and election of the highest qualified officials, in line with the criteria prescribed by the Statute. The work of the ACN is crucial to ensure that those nominated as candidates for judicial election have the necessary experience and fulfill the statutory requirements to be a judge at the ICC. The ACN is expected to draft a report of a technical character, containing information and analysis strictly on the suitability of the candidates. The report will be made available to States Parties and observers in sufficient time to allow for thorough consideration prior to the Assembly's resumed 13th session. The Coalition places great importance on the ACN report strongly urges States Parties to pay due regard to the findings and recommendations of the ACN. The report will be made available on the Court's website at: http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/asp/elections/Pages/election2015.aspx

The Coalition will continue to advocate for fair, transparent, and merit-based judicial elections. We look forward to the continued collaboration with your government as you undertake your vital role of electing the most qualified judges at the upcoming Assembly of States Parties session.

Sincerely,



William R. Pace
Convenor
Coalition for the International Criminal Court