



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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

**For more information, contact:**

**In Lima:** Michelle Reyes Milk  
Regional Coordinator for the Americas  
Coalition for the ICC  
Tel: (+1) 646 360 5082 (New York)  
or (+51) 1-202-7184 (Lima)  
E-mail: [reyes@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:reyes@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**In New York:** Brigitte Suhr  
Director of Regional Programs  
Coalition for the ICC  
Tel: (+) 1 646 465 8540  
E-mail: [suhr@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:suhr@coalitionfortheicc.org)

Linda Gueye  
Head of Communications  
Coalition for the ICC  
Tel: (+1) 646 465 8516  
E-mail: [gueye@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:gueye@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

19 April 2013

**At OAS Special Session, States Reaffirm Commitment to ICC**  
*ICC officials, state representatives and civil society discuss challenges in cooperation with ICC*

**Washington, D.C.**—On 12 April 2013, the Committee on Political and Juridical Affairs of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) hosted the Eighth High-Level Working Session on the International Criminal Court (ICC), bringing together OAS member and observer states, high-level OAS and ICC officials and members of civil society. This year's session focused on the issue of cooperation with the ICC.

“States in the Americas have proven to have the capacity to cooperate with the ICC. Following numerous resolutions and declarations of diplomatic support, it is now time for them to continue toward the achievement of concrete and tangible outcomes,” said Michelle Reyes Milk, Americas coordinator for the Coalition for the ICC.

During the session, the Americas coordinator for the Coalition joined Antonia Pereira de Souza from the ICC Office of the Prosecutor, Anne-Aurore Bertrand from the ICC Registry, Parliamentarians for Global Action member Minou Tavárez Mirabal, MP from the Dominican Republic, and Armando Meneses from the International Committee for the Red Cross in a technical panel, where they addressed some of the specific actions required to ensure cooperation with the ICC.

“All OAS member states must install mechanisms that can ensure effective cooperation with the ICC. In addition to domestic legislation, I urge your Excellencies to consider the adoption of agreements for the protection of victims and witnesses as well as agreements on enforcement of sentences,” said Tavárez Mirabal. “We owe the Court a firm response which is both preventive and coherent. We also owe it to ourselves, as state parties,” Tavárez Mirabal added. “But, above all, we owe it to victims across the globe, whose lives, hope and dignity have been destroyed by our idleness amid the face of unacceptable evil.” .

The Washington Coalition for the ICC (WICC)—a network of civil society organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the relationship between the US and the Court and promoting international justice among US stakeholders—participated as an observer to the session.

"The WICC was pleased to witness assurances of cooperation with the ICC from various OAS member states, which send a strong message to would-be perpetrators of the world's worst crimes: they will be held accountable. The Working Group welcomes the commitment to the Court shown in the affirmation of the United States that the ICC represents the future of international criminal justice, as well as in its statement regarding the expansion of its rewards program, which now extends to persons under ICC arrest warrants. The WICC expects that the dedication to the ICC of other OAS members will encourage the United States to further strengthen and expand this commitment," said John Washburn and Naseem Kourosh, WICC co-chairs.

OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza, ICC President Judge Sang-Hyun Song and Ambassador Tiina Intelmann, president of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute, each spoke during the session, urging states to move forward in ensuring cooperation with the ICC.

During their interventions, state representatives agreed on the need to move forward with measures to enhance cooperation with the ICC and shared some progress made. States emphasized the need not only to adopt ICC cooperation legislation and ratify the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court, but also implement policies that will allow them to take concrete and tangible actions to ensure such cooperation. Furthermore, States referred to their role in ensuring that the UN adopts the necessary actions that will allow the ICC to carry out its promise of the fight against impunity.

Other measures that were discussed included the freezing of assets of suspects of the ICC, exchange of information on lessons learned, the organization of seminars and workshops to disseminate the work of the ICC, as well as measures taken to ensure the arrest and surrender of individuals sought by the ICC, as was highlighted by the US delegation when referring to the expansion of the Rewards for Justice Program.

*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. There are currently eight investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; Cote d'Ivoire; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda; Kenya; Libya; and Mali. The ICC has publicly issued 22 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. The Court issued a judgment in its first trial on 14 March 2012. Two other trials are ongoing. The ICC Office of the Prosecutor has also made public that it is conducting seven preliminary examinations on four continents: Afghanistan, Colombia, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Republic of Korea and Nigeria.*

*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. [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)*

###