



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Global Coalition Urges United Arab Emirates and Oman to join ICC**

*Demonstrate commitment to international justice and fight against impunity in Middle East*

**New York**—The Coalition for the International Criminal Court has called on the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the Sultanate of Oman to demonstrate their commitment to international justice and the fight against impunity by joining the International Criminal Court (ICC).

“With people taking to the streets to demand accountability for crimes against humanity during this transformational period across the Middle-East and North Africa, joining the ICC is a clear statement that states are listening to their citizens,” said William R. Pace, convener of the Coalition, a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental organizations.

The two Middle Eastern states are the focus of the Coalition’s December 2012 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), launched to encourage more countries to join the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, which now has 121 member states.

In letters to President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and Sultan Qaboos bin Said al Said, the Coalition urged the UAE and Oman respectively to ratify the Rome Statute, the ICC’s founding treaty, stating that in doing so they can strengthen the growing movement in the MENA region towards ending impunity.

“Ratification of the Rome Statute will be an important expression of dedication from the UAE and Oman to uphold justice principles and strengthen their position in the international law arena,” said Leila Hanafi, the Coalition’s MENA regional coordinator.

With the rule of law increasingly becoming a building-block for the protection of human rights in many states in region, Arab leaders are gradually responding to their citizens' demands for accountability and justice. Working with civil society, parliamentarians, governments, academics, the media and others, the Coalition is pushing for an increased number of accessions, ratifications and full implementation of the Rome Statute in MENA.

Only 4 out of 22 Arab League states are states parties to the Rome Statute—Jordan, Djibouti, the Comoros Islands and Tunisia—and nine more are signatories (which means that they still need to ratify). However, there have been a number of important ICC related developments in the region in 2012, including Tunisia's accession to the Rome Statute and Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court, a regional diplomatic conference on the ICC held in Doha, and comments made by former International Court of Justice Judge Nabil El Arabi mentioning ratification as a priority when he was appointed Egypt's foreign minister. Kuwait and Palestine have also stated their intention to join the Court.

Ratification of the Rome Statute would allow the UAE and Oman to shape the future of international criminal justice by participating in all negotiations and decisions—including proposing amendments to the Statute—at the annual meetings of the ICC's governing body, the Assembly of States Parties.

**Background:** *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)*

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