



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Global NGO Coalition Welcomes Saint Lucia as 113th State Party to the Rome Statute**

*CICC Says CARICOM Member States are one step closer to fully embracing the new system of International Justice which they helped spearhead*

New York, NY– On 18 August 2010, Saint Lucia deposited its instrument of ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) at the UN Headquarters, becoming the 113<sup>th</sup> State Party to the ICC Treaty.

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) — a civil society network of 2,500 organizations in 150 countries advocating for a fair, effective and independent ICC and improved access to justice for victims of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity — commends Saint Lucia for its decision to join 112 other nations around the world, including fellow Caribbean Community members Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and neighboring Dominican Republic, as State Parties to the ICC.

Caribbean states played a key role in the creation and establishment of the ICC. In 1989, Trinidad and Tobago, led by then-Prime Minister A.N.R. Robinson, submitted a new agenda item for consideration to the United Nations' 44th General Assembly on the establishment of an international criminal court. By the end of that year, the motion — which was championed by a number of countries, including all CARICOM member states — propelled its way through the UN system and resulted in a consensus resolution that called for the creation of an international criminal court. This brazen move helped

establish the blueprint of what is now successfully referred to as the new international justice architecture.

The CICC and its members have been advocating for Saint Lucia's ratification since 2005, when they first conducted an advocacy mission to the country to meet with government authorities, NGOs, and the press to raise awareness on the importance of becoming parties to the ICC.

"Civil society organizations in St. Lucia have actively participated in workshops, panel discussions and other outreach activities which have been organized to generate understanding on the importance of ratification of the Rome Statute. Those activities have gone a long way in generating support from citizens and in creating awareness of the valuable role played by the ICC in the promotion of the rule of law and the quest to ensure that impunity does not prevail," said Flavia Cherry, CICC Focal Point and Director of CAFRA in St. Lucia. "By ratifying the Rome Statute, St. Lucia has also become a party to one of the most powerful instruments for protecting women's rights and advancing gender justice. Hopefully this important step will also influence our national and regional efforts."

"The CICC strongly believes that St. Lucia's ratification will help tilt the scales in favor of the ICC in the Caribbean and serve as a motivation for the remaining CARICOM members to ratify the Rome Statute. Full endorsement by all CARICOM states will demonstrate, once again, the Caribbean region's strong support to the fight against impunity," said Tanya Karanasios, CICC Program Director.

Today's ratification by St. Lucia leaves The Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica and Haiti as the remaining Caribbean states that have yet to embrace the Rome Statute. With this important step, St. Lucia has adopted an additional instrument designed to foster accountability and joins the growing community of nations around the world that have embraced the Rome Statute system.

## **BACKGROUND**

*113 countries have joined the ICC, which 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 unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of crimes contained in the Statute. To date, the ICC has opened investigations in five situations: the Central African Republic; Darfur, Sudan; Uganda; Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya and it has publicly issued twelve arrest warrants and three summonses to appear. The ICC Office of the Prosecutor has made public that it is examining at least eight situations on four continents, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Guinea and Palestine.*