



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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

**For more information, contact:**

**In New York: Mr. William Pace,**

Convenor, Coalition for the ICC

Tel: +1-646-465-8533

[pace@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:pace@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**Ms. Brigitte Suhr**

Director of Regional Programs,

Coalition for the ICC

Tel: +1 (646) 465-8540

[suhr@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:suhr@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**Mr. Tobias Hanson**

Legal Officer, Coalition for the ICC

Tel: + 1 646 465 8519

[hanson@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:hanson@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**In The Hague: Ms. Oriane Maillet**

Head of Communications, Coalition for the ICC

Tel: +31 (0) 70-3111082

[maillet@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:maillet@coalitionfortheicc.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***International Criminal Court Judicial Elections: Independent Panel  
Releases Report on Qualifications of Candidates***

*Coalition Says Report an Important Step Toward Transparent and Merit-Based  
International Elections*

The Hague (NL)—The Independent Panel on International Criminal Court Judicial Elections (Panel) issued its report yesterday on the 19 candidates for the December 2011 International Criminal Court (ICC) judicial elections. The report concludes that 15 of 19 candidates fulfil the requirements of Article 36 of the Rome Statute for the list to which they were nominated. The report is an important step toward transparent and merit-based international elections, the Coalition for the International Criminal Court said today. The ICC is the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

“The culmination of the Independent Panel process effectively raises the bar for governments to present judicial candidate who meet the distinct requirements of the Rome Statute,” stated William R. Pace, Convenor of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court. “The existence of the Independent Panel helps to address widely recognized deficiencies in nomination and election procedures in international elections. The main purpose of the Panel is to pressure governments to give much greater attention to the selection of judicial candidates.”

Between 13 June and 16 September 2011, ICC States Parties nominated 19 candidates to fill six positions of ICC judges for nine-year terms. Elections will take place at the tenth

session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC (ASP) – the Court’s governing body – to be held December 12-21 at UN Headquarters in New York. The ASP will also elect a new Prosecutor at the same session. These elections represent the most significant change to the ICC’s bench and leadership so far.

The Coalition established the Panel in December 2010 to address concerns of civil society and others about ICC elections, especially the nomination of candidates that did not meet the legal requirements of the Rome Statute, the ICC’s founding treaty. Once established, the Panel adopted its own terms of reference according to which it would determine whether a candidate is “Qualified” or “Not Qualified” according to the requirements of the Rome Statute.

The Panel’s assessments are its own. The report does not represent the views of the Coalition. However, it encourages governments to take into consideration the Panel’s independent assessments as well as other relevant information in advance of the upcoming elections.

The Panel’s report also includes several observations and recommendations to the ASP about issues it encountered in the assessment process such as the nomination, nationality and service of candidates as well as questions of health and age. The Panel also endorsed the establishment of a standing ASP Advisory Committee on nominations to perform functions similar to those of the Panel and to consider and advise the ASP on some of the issues raised in the Panel’s report. The Panel suggests “that the States Parties should give attention to any further information received by the ASP Secretariat prior to the election with respect to the candidates.”

The members of the Panel are:

**Richard Goldstone** (Chair), former Chief Prosecutor of the UN International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia

**Patricia Wald** (Vice-Chair), former Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and former Judge of the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

**Hans Corell**, former Judge of Appeal and former Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and the Legal Counsel of the United Nations

**O-Gon Kwon**, Judge and Vice President of the UN ICTY and former Presiding Judge at the Daegu High Court

**Cecilia Medina Quiroga**, Director of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Chile and former Judge and President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

The Coalition is grateful to the members of the Panel for lending their expertise as well as for the extraordinary amount of time they volunteered to this effort.

**To read the full report, visit: [www.iccindependentpanel.org](http://www.iccindependentpanel.org)**

**Background:** *The ICC is composed of judges representing all regions and principal legal systems of the world; eleven judges are women. Current judges are: Sang-Hyun Song (Republic of Korea), Fatoumata Dembele Diarra (Mali), Hans-Peter Kaul (Germany), Elizabeth Odio Benito (Costa Rica), Akua Kuenyehia (Ghana), Erkki Kourula (Finland), Anita Ušacka (Latvia), Sir Adrian Fulford (United Kingdom), Sylvia Steiner*

*(Brazil), Ekaterina Trendafilova (Bulgaria), Daniel David Ntanda Nsereko (Uganda), Bruno Cotte (France), Joyce Aluoch (Kenya), Sanji Mmasenono Monogeng (Botswana), Christine van den Wyngaert (Belgium), Cuno Tarfusser (Italy), Silvia Alejandra Fernández de Gurmendi (Argentina), Kuniko Ozaki (Japan), and René Blattman (Bolivia). The ICC Prosecutor is Luis Moreno-Ocampo (Argentina), and the Deputy Prosecutor is Fatou Bensouda (Gambia).*

*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 seven investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; Cote d'Ivoire; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda; Kenya; and Libya. The ICC has publicly issued 18 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Three trials are ongoing. The ICC prosecutor has also made public that it is examining eight situations on four continents: Afghanistan, Colombia, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Republic of Korea, Nigeria and Palestine.*

*The Coalition for the International Criminal Court is a global network of civil society organizations in over 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.*

*The Coalition for the International Criminal Court established and provided administrative support for the Independent Panel. The Coalition works in partnership with institutions and individuals around the globe in advancing its mission. Major support for the Coalition's ICC elections activities has been provided by Humanity United and the Open Society Institute, among other funders. The Coalition is deeply appreciative of all of the partners and donors that provide support to this and other ongoing efforts. More information on the Coalition's partners and activities can be found at: <http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org>*

*The contents of documents issued by the Independent Panel and the views contained therein are the sole responsibility of the Panel. The views expressed should not be taken to represent those of the Coalition, nor of any partner/donor organization. Please note that the Coalition does not endorse or oppose individual candidates but advocates for the integrity of the nomination and election procedures. Civil society member organizations of the Coalition may choose to take specific positions on candidates; such positions may only be taken in the name of the respective organization but never in the Coalition's name.*

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