



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**Global Coalition Urges Cape Verde to Join International Criminal Court
Says Treaty Ratification should be a Priority to End Impunity**

New York, USA – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)—a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations—called on Cape Verde to reflect its demonstrated commitment to international justice and the rule of law by ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ICC (APIC). The CICC has chosen Cape Verde as the focus for its November 2010 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Rome Statute system.

In a letter dated 2 November 2010 to Cape Verdean President H.E. Pedro de Verona Rodrigues Pires, the CICC urged the Cape Verdean government to prioritize its ratification of the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. The Republic of Moldova’s recent ratification in October 2010 reflects on the global impetus to end impunity through the Rome Statute system. 114 states have now acceded to or ratified the Rome Statute and 139 are signatories.

The CICC advised President Pires to heighten Cape Verde’s efforts to ratify the Rome Statute in order to ensure that progress towards Cape Verde’s ratification of the Rome Statute advances. Ratifying the treaty would be consistent with the commitment of the government of Cape Verde to uphold human rights as is enshrined in the Constitution, and to advance

international law. In addition, the CICC applauded Cape Verde's adoption of two constitutional provisions on the ICC, elucidating that Cape Verde may accept the jurisdiction of the ICC and that existing constitutional prohibitions on extradition do not prevent the exercise of ICC jurisdiction, subject to the provisions on complementarity and other terms under the Rome Statute.

William Pace, Convenor of the CICC, encouraged Cape Verde to demonstrate its commitment to the rule of law: "By ratifying the Rome Statute, Cape Verde would be expressing its commitment to promoting respect for the rights of individuals and peoples as expressed in its Constitution. Cape Verde would also be seizing a leadership initiative amongst Lusophone states in Africa, guiding the region forward to universal support for the rule of law and international justice, as represented through the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court." The CICC's call for Cape Verde's ratification follows the conclusion of the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute that took place in Kampala from 31 May to 11 June 2010.

"The Cape Verdean Association of Women Jurists (AMJ) has followed closely the process of ratification of the Rome Statute," said Maria das Dores Gomes, President of the Association. "It urges the government of Cape Verde to proceed without delay with the ratification of the Rome Statute that created the International Criminal Court to demonstrate to the international community its commitment to the rule of law and the fight against impunity. Becoming a state party will also enable Cape Verde to carry out the required judicial reforms for the implementation of the provisions of the Rome Statute into the domestic law for a positive complementarity between both jurisdictions."

As a state party, Cape Verde would be able to actively participate in the annual Assembly of States Parties (ASP) of the ICC during which states make important decisions in relation to the administration of the Court, including the election of judges and prosecutors.

There are currently 114 ICC States Parties. 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 genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. There are currently five active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda, and Kenya.

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