

14 December 2012

H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayid Al Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates

Re: Prospects of the United Arab Emirates' Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Your Highness,

I have the honor of writing to you on behalf of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations in 150 countries, campaigning for a fair, effective, and independent International Criminal Court (ICC) and increased access to justice for victims of crimes against humanity, genocide, and war crimes.

As part of its Universal Ratification Campaign for the month of November 2012, the Coalition wishes to encourage your government to hasten efforts to ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC. Commendably, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed the Rome Statute of the ICC on 27 November 2000 and has expressed its interest in this system of international criminal justice by participating in key fora such as the Assembly of State Parties to the ICC (ASP).

As of today, 121 States have become parties to the Rome Statute. While this in itself is a remarkable achievement, continuing to secure universal acceptance of the Court remains an important objective that will ensure that the ICC is able to effectively ensure justice for grave crimes.

Middle East and North Africa (MENA) delegations were a force behind the Court's founding, since negotiations for the Court began more than 20 years ago. Particularly, the Kingdom of Jordan, which ratified the Rome Statute in 2002, has played a leading role in the establishment of the Court including through its presidency of the Assembly of States Parties from 2002 to 2005. Lately, the Arab world has shown increased interest in the ICC, most notably demonstrated by Tunisia's accession to the Rome Statute in 2011. Numerous official debates have taken place, such as the high-level regional seminar on the ICC hosted by the Emir H.H. Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani in Doha in May 2011. Representatives of Morocco, Kuwait and Palestine have also stated their intent to join the ICC.

We encourage your government to reiterate its commitment to the rule of law by becoming a State Party to the Rome Statute, and depositing the ratification instrument with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Ratification of the Rome Statute would be an important expression of the Emirate's dedication to uphold justice principles and advance the UAE's positioning in the international law arena, especially in light of the country's upcoming Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council in 2013.

The CICC takes this opportunity to reaffirm support for the Gulf Coalition for the ICC, which includes many Gulf civil society representatives, legal experts, and academics committed to raise awareness on the ICC.

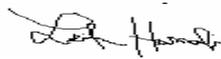
Your Highness, the Coalition urges you to use your good offices to ensure prompt treatment of the ratification dossier to reaffirm the UAE's commitment to the global fight against impunity. Your government's support for this treaty is not only crucial for ensuring global jurisdiction, legitimacy, and support for the Court but also represents a commitment to combating impunity, and advancing the principles of good governance, justice, and the rule of law.

We hope to see you among the ICC states parties in the near future, notably in this milestone year of the Rome Statute's 10th anniversary.

Please accept, Your Highness, the assurances of our highest consideration.



Brigitte Suhr
Director of Regional Programs



Leila Hanafi
Regional Coordinator – Middle East and North Africa

CC:

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai

H.H Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior

H.H. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayid Al Nahyan, Minister for Foreign Affairs

H.E Dr. Hadeef Jawa'an Al Dhaheri, Minister of Justice

H.E. Mr. Ahmed Al-Jarman, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN