



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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Global Coalition Urges Egypt to Join the International Criminal Court

Egypt Should Consider Rome Statute Ratification as a Priority

New York—The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)—a global network of more than 2,500 civil society 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—today called on Egypt to demonstrate its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court (APIC). The Coalition has selected Egypt as a focus for its May 2012 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a

monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Rome Statute. Recent parliamentary elections and upcoming presidential elections make this an opportune time for Egypt to display its commitment to justice and the rule of law by joining the Rome Statute, the Coalition said.

Egypt signed the Rome Statute on 26 December 2000. On 6 March 2011, former International Court of Justice judge Nabil El Arabi was appointed foreign minister of Egypt and mentioned ICC ratification as a priority before he was appointed secretary general of the League of Arab States.

“Following the 25th January revolution, Egypt urgently needs to ratify the Rome Statute; ratification will prevent future crimes against humanity such as occurred under the previous regime, and will greatly contribute to ending impunity for security authorities by guaranteeing a fair and independent judicial process,” said Nasser Amin, general director of the Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and Legal Profession and coordinator of the Arab and Egyptian Coalitions for the ICC. “I therefore call upon the Egyptian Peoples’ Assembly—elected after the 25th January revolution—to take the required steps towards Rome Statute ratification.”

At a time of sweeping changes across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the Coalition believes that Egypt can further strengthen this growing regional movement towards ending impunity by joining the Rome Statute.

In a letter addressed to HE Prime Minister Kamal Al-Ganzouri, the Coalition highlighted a series of developments in the region relating to the ICC during the past year, including Tunisia’s accession to the Rome Statute and APIC, the Regional Diplomatic Conference on the ICC held in Doha, Qatar, and in the Libya situation.

“Today, the Egyptian criminal justice system must meet new challenges based on a changed international environment. The police, prosecutors and the judiciary are now called upon to become scrupulous actors in observing evolving standards of human rights and accountability,” said Leila Hanafi, the Coalition’s MENA regional coordinator. “By joining the ICC, Egypt will motivate more MENA countries to join the ICC, thereby gaining a stronger voice within the movement for accountability, and participating in making the ICC a truly effective international mechanism for justice and peace.”

With Guatemala’s accession to the Rome Statute on 2 April 2012, 121 states have now acceded to or ratified the treaty. To date, the Arab League, consisting of 22 states, has only four states parties to the Rome Statute—Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Jordan and Tunisia. Ratifying the treaty would allow Egypt to assume a role in advancing human rights, accountability, justice and an ending impunity for grave crimes. Egypt would also be able to actively participate in a more significant manner 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, prosecutors and other Court officials as well as the adoption of the Court’s budget.

Background: *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 20 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. The Court issued a judgment in its first trial on 14 March 2012. Two other trials are ongoing. The ICC prosecutor has also made public that he is conducting seven preliminary examinations on four continents: Afghanistan, Colombia, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Republic of Korea and Nigeria.

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

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