



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**Coalition Welcomes European Parliament Resolution on EU Support for the International Criminal Court**

*Civil Society Says Resolution a Key Tool to Implement EU's Commitment to Justice*

**Brussels (Belgium)**—The Coalition for the International Criminal Court welcomes the European Parliament's (EP) new resolution on '[EU support for the International Criminal Court \(ICC\): Facing challenges and overcoming difficulties](#)'. This document is an important tool for the implementation of the European Union (EU) and EU member states' commitments to the International Criminal Court (ICC)—the world's first permanent international court to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

"The resolution breaks new ground on EP support for the ICC and was adopted by a large majority," explains Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens, Europe coordinator at the Coalition for the International Criminal Court—a global network of over 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. "The text commits the Parliament to play an active role in promoting the fight against impunity and the ICC in all EU policies and in the work of the European Parliament as a whole," she added.

The EP has been one of the earliest ICC supporters, not least through a number of resolutions, strong language in the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World, and the actions carried out by its members and the informal EP '*Friends of the ICC*' group.

Drafted by Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler, the resolution takes note of the challenges faced by the Court and commends EU efforts in promoting the universality of the Rome Statute—the ICC's founding treaty—and the

Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the ICC, and further encourages the adoption of national implementing legislation.

The text also provides concrete recommendations for improving EU action on the ICC. For example, the resolution calls on the EU and member states to ensure full and timely cooperation and diplomatic and political support to the Court, in particular with regard to the execution of arrest warrants. It also proposes creating innovative tools to improve support in this area including a code of conduct for contact with persons wanted by the ICC, and an internal protocol for timely and consistent EU action on instances of non-cooperation with the Court.

The EU and member states are encouraged to support third countries' efforts to carry out national proceedings on genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, in particular by taking into account the fight against impunity and the principle of complementarity in the broader context of development and rule of law assistance.

MEPs reiterated their call to EU High Representative Catherine Ashton to appoint an EU Special Representative on International Humanitarian Law and International Justice with the mandate to promote, mainstream, and represent the EU's commitment to the fight against impunity and the ICC across EU foreign policies.

MEPs also expressed concerns about the impact of the lack of funding for the Court, notably on core functions such as outreach, legal representation and the participation and protection of victims and witnesses, and called on EU states to ensure continued stable financial support to the Court.

"We now look forward to the concrete implementation of this very important report, and we hope that other EU institutions and States, both in their capacity as EU member states and as states parties to the Rome Statute, take due note of the recommendations," Meersschaert Duchens concluded.

*The 'European Parliament resolution of 17 November 2011 on EU support for the ICC: facing challenges and overcoming difficulties' (2011/2109(INI)) is available at:*

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2011-0507+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>

For more information on the EU and the ICC, visit: <http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/?mod=eu>

**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 unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. There are currently seven active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; Côte d'Ivoire; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Kenya; Libya; and Uganda. The ICC has publicly issued 18 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Three trials are ongoing. The Office of the Prosecutor has made public that it is examining at least eight situations on four continents, including 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 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: <http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org>*

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