

**FORUM-ASIA Urges Government of Nepal to Deliver on Its Commitment to the ICC****Wednesday, 25 July 2007**

(Bangkok) Today marks one year since the unanimous direction given by Nepal's former House of Representatives (HoR) to the Government to accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) urges the Government of Nepal to take a major step forward in its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by joining the Court as soon as possible.

Nepal joining the ICC would signal that it believes in justice and accountability for the worst human rights violations which are central to the rule of law and a stable, just system of governance. Nepal now has an opportunity to become the 106<sup>th</sup> state party to the Statute in order to lead the fight against crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Acceding to the Rome Statute is an opportunity for the Interim Government of Nepal to demonstrate its commitment made in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of November 2006 to establish the rule of law in Nepal. An immediate accession to the Rome Statute will facilitate to end impunity and strengthen the rule of law in Nepal.

In July 2006, Nepal's HoR of the time adopted a unanimous directive to accede to the Rome Statute of the ICC. During the lobby visit by the delegates of Global Coalition for the ICC, Asian Network for the ICC and FORUM-ASIA in August 2006, the Prime Minister, ministers and major political parties indicated that they would take appropriate measures to promptly accede to this important international instrument. Nevertheless, there have been no further developments regarding the process since then. As a steering committee member of the Coalition for the ICC (CICC) from Asia, FORUM-ASIA would like to share that the increasing number of member states is promising as a total of 105 countries have so far ratified the Rome Statute. Unfortunately, Asia remains poorly represented at the Court, and greater Asian participation is needed to ensure that the ICC is enriched by the diverse legal cultures of the region. Human rights NGOs are hopeful that the recent joining of Japan to the Court will encourage other Asian countries towards adopting the ICC and further motivate the ongoing processes in some other Asian countries.

FORUM-ASIA believes that the accession to the Rome Statute by Nepal also encourages the remaining states in Asia to enlist the call for justice.

Sincerely,



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