

**EXCERPTS FROM THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
61ST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

19-27 SEPTEMBER 2006

The General Assembly held a General Debate during its 61st session on 19-27 September 2006. Of the States representatives making statements, 7 made specific reference to the ICC: Finland (on behalf of the European Union, Acceding and Associated countries), France, Switzerland, Croatia, Liechtenstein, Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and 3 other states made indirect references to the ICC, mentioning the need for international justice and putting an end to impunity: Brazil, Chile, and Uganda.

The excerpts below (in the order they were made) have been compiled by the Coalition for the International Criminal Court. The full texts of these speeches are available at <http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/61/index.shtml>

19 SEPTEMBER 2006

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

“But what about the third great challenge facing humanity – the challenge of the rule of law, and our rights and dignity as human beings? Here, too, there has been significant progress. More rights have been enshrined in international treaties [...]. More governments today are elected by, and accountable to, those whom they govern. Humanity has actually brought to justice some of those who committed the most heinous crimes against it.”

- *UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan*

Brazil

“If we do not want war to go global, justice must go global.”

- *H.E. Mr. Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil*

Finland *(on behalf of the **European Union**, Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova)*

“The EU is also committed to ending impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. We strongly support the International Criminal Court and call upon all states that are not yet party to the Rome Statute of the ICC to ratify or accede to it without delay. The EU will continue to promote rule of law both at the national level and in international relations.”

- *H.E. Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of the Republic of Finland*

France

“France entreats the international community to ward off a further humanitarian catastrophe. I call on Sudan to accept the United Nations peace mission without delay. I call on the International Criminal Court to bring to justice those responsible for these crimes. The time has come for the immense continent of Africa with its wealth of peoples and vibrant youth, which has embarked on the road to growth and reform, to find, at long last, a destiny worthy of it. [...]

It is here that universal and sacred human rights must be defended and protected. With the new Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court, the UN returns to this primary vocation. Let us not disappoint the hopes of all those who love freedom and justice.”

- *H.E. Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic*

Switzerland

“In many States a system of criminal law has developed in which criminals are prosecuted by the State, brought before an independent court and have their sentence enforced. In this way amends is made to the victims, thereby preventing revenge and a never-ending spiral of further violence. At the same time it serves as a deterrent to potential criminals. The international community also has the same obligation with regard to war criminals. [...]

The fact that we today have an international court capable of applying international criminal law is an historic achievement. War criminals are extradited and their guilt determined through trial. This can sometimes take a long time, as the case of Liberia shows, and it can last too long, as the extradition of war criminals from the Balkans shows. However, this must occur so that all – in the Darfur conflict, for example – understand the consequences of their actions.

In order to enforce a legal system, all countries, including the large ones, should adopt the Statute on the International Criminal Court. For international law is not only of fundamental importance to small countries not capable of defending themselves from attack on their own. Large States or 'superpowers' must also have an interest in this for the benefit of their own credibility.”

- *H.E. Mr. Moritz Leuenberger, President of the Swiss Confederation*

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Chile

“Nothing justifies the violation of human rights. Chile rejects impunity.”

- *H.E. Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of Chile*

Croatia

“Croatia welcomes the fact that the International Criminal Court began work on its first cases. We attach great importance to the continuation of ICC’s successful work. My country also welcomes the fact that the number of state parties to the Rome Statute reached and surpassed 100, and we hope that the number will continue to rise.”

- *H.E. Dr. Ivo Sander, Prime Minister of Croatia*

Uganda

“It was after a careful analysis of the situation that Uganda decided to take such a painful decision to offer amnesty. Painful in the sense that we do not condone impunity. We are, however, convinced that the alternative traditional justice system that we intend to apply is an equitable solution. We call on the international community to assist in the process we have embarked on. We are determined to resolve the conflict peacefully, Peace is what our people want and it is peace that we determined to give them.”

-Hon. Sam Kutesa, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Of Uganda

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Liechtenstein

“It is now commonly understood that there can be no impunity for international crimes and that no one is immune from prosecution for having committed such crimes. This is a historic development which found its most powerful expression in the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The Court is now seized with three situations, one of which referred to it by the Security Council, and over one hundred States have become parties to the Rome Statute. This very strong momentum can only be maintained if States and indeed this organization lend their active support to a judicial institution which fully relies on such cooperation in gathering evidence and arresting indictees. Most importantly, we must realize that peace and justice are, in the long run, complementary concepts and we must uphold the principle that there can be no amnesties for the worst crimes under international law.”

-H.E. Mrs. Rita Kieber-Beck, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein

25 SEPTEMBER 2006

Uruguay

“I am very happy to inform this General Assembly that my country has taken one further step forward in the promotion in the defense of human rights. The Uruguayan Parliament has just unanimity approved a law entitled ‘Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes, and Cooperation with the International Criminal Court.’”

-H.E. Mrs. Belela Herrera, Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay (Unofficial Translation)

27 SEPTEMBER 2006

Trinidad and Tobago

“We must also bring to justice under the International Criminal Court those responsible for the crimes against humanity committed in Darfur [...]

Trinidad and Tobago applauds the efforts of the ICC and welcomes with satisfaction the progress made to bring to justice the perpetrators of those heinous crimes committed against the peoples of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Trinidad and

Tobago views the universal adherence to the ICC as integral to enriching the rule of law in the conduct of international relations, and as yet another pillar in the promotion of international peace and security. We again urge Member States of this Organization that are not yet a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC to consider acceding to this instrument as soon as possible.”

-H.E. Ambassador Philip Sealy, Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations