



**INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE DAY; A TIME TO REFLECT ON THE CHALLENGES,
IMPACT AND LESSONS FOR THE NEXT DECADE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
17th July, 2012**

Kampala, 17 July 2012 – Today marks an important day for international criminal Justice. Human Rights Network-Uganda (HURINET-U) and the Uganda Coalition on the International Criminal Court (UCICC) join the rest of the world in commemorating International Criminal Justice Day. The day was declared in Kampala in 2010 during the ICC Review Conference. The day symbolizes a commitment on behalf of the international community to end impunity for gross violations of human rights and provide justice to the victims of such crimes.

On 17th July 1998, the Rome Statute was adopted at a diplomatic conference in Rome, and entered into force on 1st July 2002. The Statute provides for the Court's jurisdiction, which is primarily to investigate and prosecute the core international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression where states are unable or unwilling to do so themselves. Over 121 states are signatories to the Statute and 32 countries are still to ratify it.

In 2004, the ICC's Office of the Prosecutor initiated an investigation into the situation in Uganda. Warrants of arrest were issued for the highest-ranking Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) commanders. The LRA operated in Northern Uganda since 1986, and the conflict has since spread to South Sudan, Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), causing instability in the region.

The 10th anniversary of the Rome Statute comes at an important time for the ICC, as this year also marked its first verdict against former commander Thomas Lubanga who was convicted of enlisting and conscripting child soldiers and using them to participate in hostilities in the DRC.

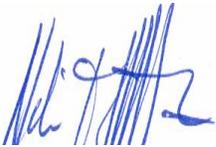
The UCICC and HURINET-U commend the work of the ICC for its work thus far and for the steps it has taken to ensure that justice rather than impunity prevails in the world.

We continue to call upon;

1) All State Parties to the Rome Statute to proactively support the International Criminal Court in the exercise of its mandate to fight against impunity in the world.

- 2) All State Parties to the Rome Statute to prioritize their obligations under the instrument and assist the Court to execute all outstanding arrest warrants in the different situation countries.
- 3) All supra natural bodies such as the African Union and the East African Community to support the work of the Court on the African Continent and take steps towards ensuring that the African Region champions the fight against impunity.
- 4) All State Parties to the Rome Statute to align their national investigatory, prosecutorial, judicial and legal systems with the aspirations of the Rome Statute system so as to demonstrate their national commitment towards bringing perpetrators of grave crimes to justice.
- 5) All States Parties to domesticate the Rome Statute into their national laws to ensure that those who are responsible for perpetrating heinous crimes can and will be held accountable.
- 6) All Governments who have yet to ratify the Rome Statute to do so in order to ensure justice for victims of grave crimes.
- 7) All State Parties to ratify the amendments to the Rome Statute that were proposed during the first ever Review Conference of the ICC that was held in Kampala

Dated at Kampala this 17th July, 2012



Mohammed Ndifuna
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