



**Coalition  
for the  
International  
Criminal Court**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**

### **Global Coalition urges CARICOM Member States to Join the ICC before Review Conference** *Five Countries Left to Solidify Caribbean Community Commitment to International Justice*

(New York, December 10, 2009) – As part of a region-wide effort, the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) today called on five CARICOM countries – Bahamas, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica and St. Lucia– to ratify or accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) as soon as possible in order to consolidate the Caribbean’s commitment to international justice and the global fight against impunity. In a letter sent to each of the five governments, the CICC – a global alliance of more than 2,500 organizations working to ensure that the Court is fair, effective and independent – has asked these remaining CARICOM member states to take immediate action to ratify the ICC treaty prior to the upcoming Review Conference to be held in Kampala, Uganda in mid 2010. This crucial step will allow all States in the region to fully participate during this important meeting that will address, among other things, the adoption of a definition for the crime of aggression and an evaluation of the successes and challenges the ICC has faced.

Caribbean states have played a key role in the creation and establishment of the ICC. In 1989, Trinidad and Tobago submitted a new agenda item for consideration to the United Nation’s 44<sup>th</sup> General Assembly about the establishment of an international criminal court. By the end of that year, the motion – which was championed by a number of countries including all of the CARICOM member states – propelled its way through the UN system and resulted in a consensus resolution that called for the creation of an international criminal court. To date, 110 countries, including CARICOM member states Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as fellow Caribbean nation, Dominican Republic, have joined the ICC.

The renewed call to the region to ratify the Rome Statute is based in part by the positive re-engagement of the United States with the ICC after years of pursuing a policy of non-cooperation with the Court. The US, for the first time since the Court’s creation, participated in the Assembly of States Parties, sending a large delegation to the November 2009 ASP held in The Hague. The elimination of legislation implementing aid cuts towards countries which refused to sign bilateral immunity agreements with the US is further evidence of a different policy orientation towards the ICC.

The CICC’s letter also highlighted how the region’s leadership and guidance have significantly shaped the evolution of the Court, noting as examples the Hon. Arthur N.R. Robinson’s vision as part of the Trust Fund for Victims and former Judge Karl T. Hudson-Phillips’ expertise on the bench. As Flavia Cherry, National Representative of CAFRA St. Lucia noted “We urge our Governments to ratify the Rome Statute expeditiously in keeping the pivotal role that our region has played in the very establishment of the ICC. The International Criminal Court continues to live up to its founding principles, as the greatest advance by international law of the last decade and we must therefore seize this opportunity to offer our united and full support for its important work towards ending impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.”

Commenting on hopes that CARICOM will consolidate as a region completely committed to the ICC, CICC Convenor William Pace said, “CARICOM Member States are closely associated with the Court’s

genesis. Particularly at this juncture when the Court is dealing with its first cases and confronting important challenges, support and cooperation from all States across the globe remains vital in order for the ICC to sustain long term global legitimacy and effectiveness. With Chile's recent ratification of the Rome Statute, the entire South American region has recognized the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. We hope that this can set a precedent for the Caribbean region, and that all Caribbean countries will soon join the system of international justice as enshrined in the Rome Statute. ”

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