



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**Global Coalition Urges Libya to Join the International Criminal Court
*Libya Should Prioritize Accession to the Rome Statute***

New York/Rabat – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC) —a global network of more than 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— today called on Libya to demonstrate its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court (APIC). The Coalition has selected Libya as a focus for its February 2012 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Rome Statute system.

In a letter dated 7 February 2012 to Chairman of the National Transitional Council (NTC) H.E. Mustafa Abdel Jalil, the Coalition urged the TNC to demonstrate its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by acceding to the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the ICC—the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

At a time when sweeping changes are occurring across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the Coalition believes that Libya can further strengthen this growing movement in the region towards ending impunity by joining the ICC.

“Acceding to the Rome Statute would be consistent with the commitment of the government of Libya to uphold human rights as enshrined in its Constitutional Declaration,” said Brigitte Suhr, Director of Regional Programs.

In the letter, the Coalition highlighted a series of developments in the region relating to the ICC during the past year. This included Tunisia’s accession to the Rome Statute and Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Court (APIC), the Regional Diplomatic Conference on the ICC held in Doha, and comments made by former International Court of Justice Judge Nabil El Arabi when appointed Foreign Minister of Egypt mentioning ratification as a priority. In addition, representatives of Kuwait and Palestine have also stated their intent to join the ICC.

“Today, the Libyan criminal justice system must meet new challenges based on a changed international environment. The police, prosecutors, and legal framework are now called upon to become scrupulous actors in observing evolving standards of human rights and accountability,” said Leila Hanafi, the Coalition’s MENA Regional Coordinator. “By joining the ICC, Libya will motivate more MENA countries to ensure universal acceptance of the Court, to gain a stronger voice within the world of global justice, and participate in making the ICC a truly effective, international mechanism for justice and peace.”

On 26 October 2011, the Coalition sent a letter to H.E. Mustafa Abdul Jalil urging Libya to prioritize accession to the Rome Statute similar to the steps taken by Tunisia. With respect to the situation in Libya, ICC arrest warrants remain outstanding against Saif Al Islam Al Gaddafi and Abdullah Al Senussi.

With Vanuatu’s accession to the Rome Statute on 2 December 2011, 120 states have now acceded to or ratified the treaty. To date, the Arab League, consisting of 22 states, has only 4 states parties to the Rome Statute – Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Jordan and Tunisia. Accession to the treaty would allow Libya to participate as a state party in the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC.

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 unwilling or unable to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. There are currently seven investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; Cote d'Ivoire; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda; Kenya; and Libya. The ICC has publicly issued 19 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Three trials are*

ongoing. The ICC prosecutor has also made public that it is examining eight situations on four continents: 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: www.coalitionfortheicc.org.

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