



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

www.coalitionfortheicc.org

For more information, contact:

In Manila: Evelyn Balais-Serrano
CICC Regional Coordinator for Asia-Pacific
Tel: +632 456 6196 or +632 926 7882
E-mail: serrano@coalitionfortheicc.org

In New York: Michelle Reyes
CICC Outreach Liaison for Asia-Pacific
Tel: (+) 1 646 465 8520
E-mail: reyes@coalitionfortheicc.org

In The Hague: Oriane Maillet
CICC Head of Communications
Tel: (+31) 70 311 10 82
maillet@coalitionfortheicc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2 May 2011

Global Coalition Urges Maldives to Join the International Criminal Court

Coalition Says Rome Statute Accession should be a Priority to End Impunity

New York, USA – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court—a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations in 150 countries—called on Maldives to strengthen its demonstrated commitment to international justice and the rule of law by acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The Coalition has chosen Maldives as the focus for its May 2011 Universal Ratification Campaign, a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Court.

In a letter dated 2 May 2011 to Maldives President H.E. Mr. Mohamed Nasheed, the Coalition urged the government of Maldives to prioritize its accession of the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. The Rome Statute came into force in July 2002 and now has the support of well over half of the world's nations. To date, 114 states have ratified or acceded to the treaty, and 139 are signatories.

The Coalition encouraged Maldives to ensure progress towards completion of its accession procedures. During his report at the *Second Asia Pacific Parliamentary Consultation on the Universality of the ICC* held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 9-11 March 2011, Minister of Justice and Attorney General H.E. Ahmed Sali Sawad stated that the Committee on National Security is currently evaluating Maldives' accession to

the Statute and is due to submit its report during the next parliamentary session. The Coalition hopes that Parliament will move forward in holding an in-depth debate on the final approval of the Statute.

“Maldives’ decision to join the ICC reflects its strong desire to be part of the international community’s collective efforts towards international justice,” said Evelyn Balais-Serrano, the Coalition’s Asia Regional Coordinator. “It signals its resolve to move forward in its goal of ending impunity locally and globally.”

Maldives’ accession to the Rome Statute will contribute toward strengthening the Asia and Pacific region’s under-represented voice at the ICC. Currently, only seven Asian states—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and Timor-Leste—are member states of the Court. Given Maldives’ important role in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation as current Chair, represented by Secretary-General H.E. Ms. Fathimath Dhiyana Saeed, Maldives’ accession will spur other states in the region to join the growing global movement for accountability for the most serious crimes.

“The Coalition encourages Maldives to embrace this new system of international justice and honor its growing commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights, as has been demonstrated through its current leadership in SAARC,” noted William Pace, Convenor of the Coalition.

As a state party, Maldives would be able to actively participate in the annual Assembly of States Parties (ASP) of the ICC during which states make important decisions in relation to the administration of the Court, including the election of judges and prosecutors. A year from now, six judges, the chief prosecutor and two deputy prosecutors will complete their terms of office, rendering their positions vacant. By acceding to the treaty by 2 September 2011, Maldives can effectively nominate candidates to these important posts to ensure national and regional representation in this new mechanism for international justice.

Background: *The ICC is the world’s first, permanent international court to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. There are currently 114 ICC states parties. Central to the Court’s mandate is the principle of complementarity, which holds that the Court will only intervene if national legal systems are unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. There are currently six active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Kenya; Libya; and Uganda. The ICC has publicly issued 15 arrest warrants and nine summonses to appear. Three trials are ongoing. The Office of the Prosecutor has made public that it is examining at least nine situations on four continents, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Georgia, Guinea, Honduras, Republic of Korea, Nigeria, and Palestine.*

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court includes 2,500 civil society organizations in 150 different 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

###