



NPWJ welcomes Libya arrest warrants' request: International community must extend full cooperation to the ICC

Brussels-Rome, 16 May 2011

Today the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, announced that he has submitted to the Pre-Trial Chamber I a request to issue three arrest warrants against the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, his son Saif al Islam Gaddafi and the intelligence chief Abdullah Al Senussi for serious crimes allegedly committed in Libya since 15 February 2011, during the violent Government crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations and the armed conflict that followed. On 26 February 2011, the UN Security Council unanimously referred the situation in Libya to the ICC and on 3 March, the Prosecutor announced the decision to open an investigation.

Statement by Alison Smith, Legal Counsel of No Peace Without Justice:

“No Peace Without Justice and the Transnational Nonviolent Radical Party welcome the Prosecutor’s request to issue arrest warrants in relation to crimes against humanity committed in Libya, including for Colonel Muammar Gaddafi. This is a fundamental step to ensure that for the first time in decades, the cycle of upholding political power through violence is broken, and this authoritarian regime is being challenged to account for its repressive tactics.”

“NPWJ appreciates the policy focus of the Prosecutor on “those who bear the greatest responsibility” for the most serious crimes allegedly committed. We note that the arrest warrants requested today refer only to individuals accused of crimes against humanity committed during the Libyan Government’s violent suppression of protests by unarmed civilians. The Prosecutor has made clear that his office is also investigating war crimes and crimes against humanity being committed in the context of the armed conflict currently ongoing in Libya and we call on the Prosecutor to continue to investigate thoroughly the totality of the crimes committed in order to identify those allegedly bearing the greatest responsibility.”

“With its unanimous decision to refer the situation in Libya to the ICC, the Security Council has begun to uphold its responsibility to protect the people of Libya, but States now need to turn that decision into reality. NPWJ urges the international community to provide full and complete support to the ICC in its mandate to ensure accountability for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed in Libya since 15 February 2011. If the judges confirm the Prosecutor’s requests presented today to issue warrants of arrest, the only exile deal possible for alleged perpetrators will now require a stop over in The Hague. ”

“The Court also has the responsibility to carry out its mandate to fulfill victims’ rights under the Rome Statute and it should begin outreach and interaction with victims at the earliest possible occasion. NPWJ urges the ICC to begin outreach immediately with victims and affected communities – with the Prosecutor’s request for arrest warrants, there is a pressing need to engage directly with those affected by the violence in order to promote understanding of the Court and manage expectations.”

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