

Note on the Passing of Wangari Muta Maathai

New York (USA), 27 September 2011 - The Coalition for the International Criminal Court is saddened to learn of the passing of Wangari Muta Maathai on 25 September 2011. Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai was an environmentalist, a civil society and women's rights activist, and a former parliamentarian. She was the founder of the Green Belt Movement, a non-governmental organization based in Kenya created to mobilize community consciousness using tree planting as an entry point for self-determination, equity, improved livelihoods and security, and environmental conservation.

Statement by William Pace, Convenor of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court:

"The Coalition for the ICC was very, very sad to receive news of the passing of Wangari Maathai on September 25th.

My work with Wangari goes back to 1989 and the preparatory meetings for the 1992 Earth Summit. Wangari joined us occasionally at ICC Preparatory Committee meetings in the basement of the UN in the late 1990s.

She was an African woman with a project to plant trees to replenish the denuded plains of her country, being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Imagine the force of character of such a person! Powerful and wealthy world leaders campaign for decades for this recognition, usually in vain. Wangari was a friend and supporter of international justice and the Coalition for many years. Her goodness, her example will inspire us to continue the task, planting and watering and protecting the trees of freedom, equality and justice throughout our earth.

Many of you will recall that Wangari delivered the introductory statement at the CICC-VRWG Review Conference side event on victims and affected communities.

This is the excerpt from the Coalition's Review Conference Report regarding her statement: *'Nobel Prize Winner Wangari Maathai made the introductory statement, emphasizing the need for civil society and other actors to continue working on the national level to complement the ICC's efforts. She underlined the importance of the ICC as a means to ensure that victims have access to justice. On behalf of the Nobel Womens' Initiative, Ms. Maathai stressed the need to support victims and the impossibility of building peace without justice.' ...*"

The Coalition for the International Criminal Court includes more than 2,500 civil society organizations in 150 countries working in partnership to strengthen international cooperation with the ICC; ensure that the ICC 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