

STATEMENT

Odhikar has been commemorating International Justice Day for many years now on its own and as part of the International Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC). The day commemorates 17 July 1998 when the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) was adopted by the international community to end impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes of international concern-genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and aggression, crimes that threatens peace and security, for the people of the countries concerned, the region and the world.

Odhikar's successful and sustained campaign in Bangladesh has resulted in ratification of the Rome Statute by Bangladesh in March 2010. On this day, on the one hand, there are much to celebrate that there is now in place a functioning International Criminal Court and an international justice mechanism, but on the other hand, serious crimes are continuing to victimise in massive numbers in many parts and regions, in Africa, Asia and in Middle East.

On this day, Odhikar reflects on the suffering of millions of children, women and men who were victimised and waited for justice, including victims of international crimes committed in Bangladesh during 1971 irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, religious or political ideology and resolve to keep up working for justice.

Odhikar alarmingly notes that State Parties to the Rome Statute as well as other States, who are obliged to cooperate with the ICC, are markedly reluctant to do so. Odhikar calls upon all States to support the ICC in its pursuit for justice and international rule of law.

Odhikar is concerned about selective approach of the UN Security Council in charging their chartered duties to maintain international peace and security, which impacts on the credibility of the ICC. Security Council should not be biased in its referral to the ICC, which it has been until this day. If other serious situations not referred such as Palestine, the legitimacy of the ICC will be affected for politically motivated actions of the Security Council.

On this day, Odhikar urges those countries, who have not acceded to the Rome Statute to do to turn the ICC a truly universal justice instrument.



DR. C R Abrar
President



Adilur Rahman Khan
Secretary