



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**Global Coalition Urges Togo to Join International Criminal Court
Civil Society Says Treaty Accession should be a Priority to End Impunity**

New York, USA – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court today called on Togo to demonstrate its 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 Togo and Libya as the focus countries for its February 2012 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

Exactly a year ago, the Coalition called on the government of Togo to prioritize its accession to the Rome Statute. Today, in a letter dated 6 February 2012 and addressed to H.E. President Faure Gnassingbé, the Coalition—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— renewed its call to the Togolese government to further demonstrate Togo’s democratic credentials and attest to its commitment to the rule of law, justice, and peace, by joining the other 33 African nations in embracing the Rome Statute.

“The conditions are very good for Togo’s accession, taking into consideration that 33 African states have engaged in the fight against impunity for the most heinous crimes,” said Vé Hotowossi. “It is also apparent that the international community for the most part (120 states parties) has accepted the justice system established by the Rome Statute and represented by the International Criminal Court in order to fight against impunity for serious crimes, and it would be unfortunate for our country to be on the sidelines of this community.”

The Coalition applauded the efforts put forth by Togo in engaging with the ICC, namely through its participation in several sessions of the Assembly of States Parties of the ICC, and in particular attending and contributing to debates and sessions at the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute, held in Kampala, Uganda, from 31 May to 11 June 2010. Encouraging President Gnassingbé to match the attendance and contributions of its officials at the Review Conference with concrete action, the Coalition urged prioritization of Togo’s accession to and implementation of the Rome Statute.

“We believe that the Togolese officials will ultimately match their words with action, particularly since all missions conducted to the country to date lead us to believe that the fight for international justice is a priority for the country,” said Francis Dako, the Coalition’s Regional Coordinator for Africa. “We are therefore confident that they will take the necessary administrative steps for Togo’s accession to the Rome Statute of the ICC – which embodies international criminal justice and the fight against impunity today – without further delay.

To date, 120 states worldwide have joined the Rome Statute. As a state party, Togo would be able to actively participate in a more significant manner 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, prosecutors, and other Court officials as well as the adoption of the Court’s budget. It would also assume a role in advancing human rights, accountability, justice, and an end to impunity for grave crimes in Africa and in the world.

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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