



Coalition for the International Criminal Court
www.iccnw.org

For more information, contact

In Dhaka:

Adilur Rahman Khan
Secretary, Odhikar
Tel: + 880 2 9888 587
E-mails: odhikar.bd@gmail.com
odhikar@citech-bd.com

In the Philippines:

Evelyn Serrano
Asia Coordinator
Coalition for the ICC
Tel: +63 2 9267882
E-mail: Serrano@iccnw.org

In New York:

Michelle Reyes
Asia Outreach Liaison
Coalition for the ICC (New York Secretariat)
Tel: +1 646 465 8520
E-mail: reyes@iccnw.org

Anaga Dalal
Head of Communications
Coalition for the ICC (New York Secretariat)
Tel: +1 646 465 8517
E-mail: dalal@iccnw.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 August 2009

GLOBAL COALITION CALLS ON BANGLADESH TO JOIN ICC

Says Rahman Government Signed ICC Statute Decade Ago and Well Poised to Now Ratify

New York, USA – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)—a global network of more than 2,500 civil society organizations—this week called on the People’s Republic of Bangladesh to accede to the Rome Statute, the founding treaty of the International Criminal Court, without further delay. Bangladesh is the August 2009 target for the Coalition’s Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), which each month calls upon a different country to join the Court.

In a letter dated 13 August 2009 to Bangaldeshi President Mr. Md. Zillur Rahman the CICC urged Bangladesh to prioritize its accession to the Rome Statute. The government of Mr. Rahman signed the Rome Statute on 16 September 1999 and his accession to power in December 2008 signifies an end to Bangladesh’s two year state of emergency.

“Now is the time for Bangladesh to move beyond the inertia and confusion of the past years and take a leadership role in South Asia by joining the International Criminal

Court,” says Ahmed Ziauddin, coordinator of the Asian Network for the ICC and Advisor of Dhaka-based Odhikar, a member of the CICC.

“As Bangladesh works to address impunity for past crimes and reestablish the rule of law, joining the ICC will help ensure that grave crimes are not committed in the future,” he said.

The ratification process in Bangladesh requires approval only by the Cabinet, not the parliament. National coalition members maintain that the Rahman government’s recent commitment to bring the law governing the trial of war criminals up to international standards is a good sign of the government’s commitment to fighting impunity at home and abroad.

“Bangladesh can become the first country in South Asia to join the ICC, paving the way for an end to impunity in a region vastly under-represented at the Court,” said Brigitte Suhr, director of regional programs for the Coalition. “There are currently 110 ICC states parties. The movement to put an end to the commission of grave crimes keeps growing. Bangladesh can make history by putting its region on the map of countries committed to justice.”

Once Bangladesh joins the Court, the under-represented Asia/Pacific region will have a stronger voice at the ICC and can participate in a more meaningful manner. Currently, seven Asian states—Afghanistan, Cambodia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Timor-Leste—are member states of the Court. Bangladesh’s accession is sure to spur other states in the region to join the growing global movement for accountability for the most serious crimes.

There are currently four active investigations before the Court: Uganda; the Democratic Republic of Congo; Darfur, Sudan; and the Central African Republic. The Court also has several situations under analysis, including in Colombia, Afghanistan, Georgia, Kenya and Cote d’Ivoire. It has issued arrest warrants in each of the four situations under investigation.

The June/July 2009 target for the Coalition’s Universal Ratification Campaign was Indonesia.

###