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World leaders attend China ceremony with war criminal, disregarding victims and international justice

Publication date: Thursday 3 September 2015

Description:

FIDH and its member organisation in Sudan, the African Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (ACJPS), strongly condemn the fact that world leaders who claim to support international justice and peace chose to participate in a ceremony in Beijing alongside Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir, who is currently wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) on several counts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

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"The presence of these leaders at the ceremony along with Omar Al Bashir is an insult to the victims of mass atrocities in Sudan, and to international justice in general," stated Karim Lahidji, President of FIDH. ***"Instead of silently attending a ceremony alongside Al Bashir, they should be calling for his transfer to the International Criminal Court to answer the charges of serious international crimes."***

At today's military parade organised by the Chinese authorities to commemorate the end of World War Two, heads of State and United Nations (UN) representatives including Ban Ki Moon (UN Secretary General), Jacob Zuma (President of South Africa) and Miloš Zeman (President of the Czech Republic) sat alongside Al Bashir. Other notable attendees who should have refused the invitation included Nout Wellink, State Secretary of The Netherlands, the country that houses the ICC; and Laurent Fabius, Foreign Minister of France, the country that drafted the UN resolution that referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC in 2005.

As outlined in our recent open letters addressed to the [Chinese authorities, heads of state](#), and [government and UN officials](#), State Parties to the Rome Statute have the responsibility to "avoid contact with persons subject to a warrant of arrest issued by the Court". [\[1\]](#) UN officials, notably Ban Ki Moon, have the obligation to avoid attending "any ceremonial or similar occasion" where persons who are wanted by the ICC will be present. [\[2\]](#)

"It makes a mockery of justice that world leaders, including the UN Secretary General himself, have chosen to attend the ceremony alongside Al Bashir despite clear guidance that they should not and whilst grave international crimes continue to be perpetrated in Sudan," stated Katherine Perks, Acting Director of ACJPS.

Moreover, in inviting Al Bashir to the event, China has flouted its own responsibilities as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the world body responsible for upholding international peace and justice that referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC.

Our organisations condemn the invitation extended to Al Bashir in defiance of his arrest warrants, and the fact that high-level UN and government representatives disregarded their obligations not to attend such an event alongside an ICC fugitive.

[\[1\]](#) ASP Resolution ICC-ASP/13/Res.3 of 17 December 2014.

[\[2\]](#) United Nations Guidance on contacts with persons who are the subject of arrest warrants or summonses issued by the International Criminal Court, presented by the UN Secretary General to the UN Security Council in April 2013.