



Coalition for the International Criminal Court

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Global Coalition Urges the Philippines to Ratify the Rome Statute Says ICC Ratification should be a Priority to Ensure Accountability**

**New York, USA** – The Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC)—a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations—called on the Philippines to demonstrate its commitment to international justice and the rule of law by ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The CICC has chosen the Philippines as the focus for its August 2010 Universal Ratification Campaign (URC), a monthly campaign launched to encourage countries to join the Court.

In a letter dated 1 August 2010 to newly-elected Philippine President H.E. Benigno S. Aquino III, the CICC urged the new Philippine government to prioritize its ratification of the Rome Statute—the founding treaty of the first permanent international court capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. With Bangladesh’s ratification in March 2010, 111 states have now acceded to or ratified the treaty, and 139 are signatories.

The CICC advised the president to continue prioritizing ratification of the Rome Statute in order to ensure that progress towards the Philippines’ ratification of the Rome Statute is not lost. Ratifying the treaty would be consistent with the commitment of the government of the Philippines to uphold human rights as is enshrined in the Constitution, and to advance international law as reflected in “*The Philippine Act on Crimes against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes against Humanity*,” adopted on 11 December 2009.

William Pace, Convenor of the CICC, encouraged the Philippines to demonstrate its

commitment to the rule of law: “Our CICC members in the Philippines have great respect for democracy and the rule of law. We believe the government of the Philippines can advance these principles and continue to set an example nationally and throughout Asia by ratifying the Treaty for the International Criminal Court.” The CICC’s renewed call for the Philippines’ ratification follows the conclusion of the first Review Conference of the Rome Statute that took place in Kampala from 31 May to 11 June 2010.

Mrs. Loretta Ann P. Rosales, co-chair of the Philippines Coalition for the International Criminal Court, stressed that “Ratifying the Rome Statute would demonstrate the commitment of the new government of Philippines to uphold justice, human rights and the rule of law. We urge you to facilitate the prompt treatment of the ratification dossier to allow the Philippines to continue its path toward becoming a State Party to the treaty.”

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

As a state party, the Philippines would be able to actively participate 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 and prosecutors.

*There are currently 111 ICC States Parties. Central to the Court’s mandate is the principle of complementarity, which holds that the Court will only intervene if national legal systems are unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. There are currently five active investigations before the Court: the Central African Republic; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Darfur, the Sudan; Uganda, and Kenya.*

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