

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

25 January 2018

**Oby Nwankwo tribute: A pioneer of African, global and gender justice**

*Founder of Nigeria's CIRDDOC and Coalition Steering Committee member passed on 9 December 2018*

**New York/The Hague**—With profound sadness, the Coalition for the International Criminal Court has learned of the passing of our Steering Committee member Ms. Oby Nwankwo on 9 December 2017.

"Oby was one of the finest leaders in the Coalition – in Africa and globally. Her commitment to gender justice and women's human rights received worldwide recognition," **said William R. Pace, Coalition Convenor.** "It feels like we have lost a member of our own Coalition family."

With a legal career spanning more than 30 years, Oby Nwankwo was known across her home continent and around the world as a champion for gender justice and human rights. A lifelong supporter of civil society, Nwankwo founded and served as Executive Director of the Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre (CIRDDOC), a Nigerian NGO which sponsors trainings and network-building activities for members of civil society, parliamentarians and other key stakeholders to promote human rights, good governance and access to justice and rule of law.

In her capacity as Executive Director of CIRDDOC, Nwankwo served on the Steering Committee of both the Coalition for the ICC, and the Nigerian Coalition for the ICC (NCICC).

"The NCICC and indeed the entire human rights community across Africa will miss her great leadership roles and indomitable spirit but all those she had mentored will keep her vision alive through each small action they continue to take toward a better world. Oby was indeed the Amazon of women's human rights and will forever be missed," said Coalition Steering Committee member and chair of the NCICC, Chino Obiagwu.

She additionally served as Chairperson of the Civil Society Coordinating Committee on Election Reform (CSCC), an umbrella organization for all civil society organizations engaging the constitutional and electoral reform processes in Nigeria.

Not only did Oby Nwankwo stand as a strong voice for the fight against impunity and violations of human rights in her native Nigeria and West African region, she took this fight to the world stage as well.

She was a member of the ICC's Gender Justice Team and of the Advisory Board of the Global Fund for Women. She brought her legal expertise and passion to her pursuit of the domestication of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa by the Nigerian

**CONTACTS**

**In New York**  
William R. Pace  
Executive Director  
Coalition for the ICC  
[pace@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:pace@coalitionfortheicc.org)  
+1 646 465 8510

Jelena Pia-Comella  
Deputy Executive Director  
Coalition for the ICC  
[comella@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:comella@coalitionfortheicc.org)  
+1.646.465.8525

Kirsten Meerschaert  
Director of Programs  
Coalition for the ICC  
[meerschaert@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:meerschaert@coalitionfortheicc.org)  
+31 (0) 70 311 1087

Niall Matthews  
Head of Communications  
Coalition for the ICC  
[matthews@coalitionfortheicc.org](mailto:matthews@coalitionfortheicc.org)  
+31 (0) 70-3111085



National and State Assemblies. Nwankwo was later elected for two consecutive four-year terms as a member of the CEDAW Expert Committee in January 2013.

The Coalition would like to express our sincerest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Oby Nwankwo.

### ***About the Coalition for the ICC***

*The Coalition for the ICC is a network of 2,500 civil society organizations, small and big, in 150 countries fighting for global justice for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide for over 20 years. We made international justice happen; now we're making it work. <http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/>*

### ***About the ICC***

*The ICC is the world's first permanent international court to have jurisdiction over 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 unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. As one of the most historic advances in the protection of global human rights, the innovative system established by the Rome Statute is designed to punish perpetrators, bring justice to victims and contribute to stable, peaceful societies. The Court has already made significant progress in holding those most responsible for atrocities to account. Victims are already receiving help to rebuild their lives. But global access to justice remains uneven, and many governments continue to deny the ICC jurisdiction where it is most needed.*

COALITION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

# PRESS RELEASE

[WWW.COALITIONFORTHEICC.ORG](http://WWW.COALITIONFORTHEICC.ORG)

