Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, I’m honored to announce that we will launch our commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on February 15, 2018 with a reception in the lobby of the permanent premises of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.

Testifying to the close and constructive working relationship maintained over the years between the Coalition and the Court, ICC President Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi has agreed to preside over the Coalition’s reception, and we’re very pleased that the Prosecutor, the Registrar and other senior officials of the ICC have agreed to help commemorate this incredible advance by joining us as we launch our reunion at the Court premises!

We should do all we can to commemorate, celebrate, and honor the government and international organization leaders, and the Coalition members who helped achieve this historic victory for peace and justice. And, we hope the Coalition launch will be the beginning of a year of celebrations throughout the world.

We’re confident in our ability to organize and coordinate a number of events in The Hague following the reception – on Thursday February 15 (afternoon), Friday February 16, and Saturday February 17 – that will involve all stakeholders.

At the Coalition’s request, the Assembly of States Parties at its 15th annual session (November 2016) adopted a resolution including the provision:
“Encourages the Court, States Parties, relevant international organizations and civil society to commemorate in 2018 the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute.”

We’re optimistic that The Netherlands and other governments, the City of The Hague and other institutions, and Coalition members will join in by supporting and organizing their own events during the reunion weekend.

The Coalition will assume responsibility for the costs of the launch reception, but everyone, every group will need to be responsible for their own expenses.

There were hundreds of Coalition members present in Rome in 1998 during the negotiations held between June 15 and July 17 – and hundreds more government and United Nations (UN) representatives in attendance at the treaty conference. Many times this number have worked within the Rome Statute system with governments, NGOs, the UN, the ICC, media, and others in the years since.

Ideally the Coalition would hope for all who have worked for the Rome Statute system of international justice since 1994 to come together for a reunion over the launch weekend – to renew friendships and to celebrate one of the greatest advances in the history of international law and the rule of law: the adoption and then ratification of the Rome Statute, and the resulting establishment of the ICC.

We hope that all receiving this “Save-the-Date” will help us identify, track down and reach out to those who should be invited!

While it’s our hope that we’ll get to see every one of you over the weekend, we must bear in mind limited capacity at the ICC premises for the commemoration launch reception and request your replies as soon as possible.

The Coalition Secretariat will create a web-page and other resources over the coming weeks to help in the search and coordination of the reunion. You can reach us at RS20@coalitionfortheicc.org.

Please consider joining us in The Hague next February 15-17, 2018!

Bill Pace
Convenor, Coalition for the International Criminal Court