



JUSTICE WITHOUT FRONTIERS
عدل بلا حدود

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Speech by Brigitte Chelebian of Justice Without Frontiers

Mr. President,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Brigitte Chelebian, lawyer and president of *Justice Without Frontiers*, and coordinator of the Lebanese Coalition for the International Criminal Court.

The foremost objective of establishing the International Criminal Court is to end impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes and to contribute to the prevention of such crimes. And ten years after the establishment of this court, it must be emphasized that it is currently facing substantial challenges to ensure its independence and to achieve its goal of justice, as well to encourage countries non-States parties to join it; especially the Arab countries.

With respect for my country, Lebanon, one cannot forget the wars and violations of international law and its threats affecting Lebanon and its citizens. You are aware of the challenges in Lebanon to end the culture of impunity, and this has been evident through the construction of the International Tribunal for the late Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. Perhaps that was the first time that we heard the Arab media talk about putting an end to impunity of for perpetrators of international crimes. With regards to Lebanon's accession to the International Criminal Court, it must be noted that there is no obstacle in Lebanese laws which prevent accession, but that there must be a political decision to do so. This requires political figures to become informed about the International Criminal and to resolve all of their questions and concerns in order to agree to support the Court. This also requires awareness and knowledge on the court by civil society in order for civil society to encourage the Lebanese state to join. At the international level,

universal acceptance, will be determined through the investigations carried out by the court, the decisions made by the Court and, most importantly, the enforcement of the decisions. Hence, there is a clear need for member states of the International Criminal Court to actively cooperate at all levels. Such cooperation requires the harmonization of domestic laws with the Rome Statute. We also see the need to create a mechanism to ensure cooperation by non-States parties, as provided for in Article 87 of the Rome Statute.

As for the crimes investigated by the court, we insist that the Court investigate gender crimes and that they develop standards of conduct so as to safeguard victims and witnesses. The trafficking of women, forced pregnancy, rape and other crimes against women --- are sensitive ones, some of which could lead to further crimes, such as the killing of a rape victim.

The ICC is not an end in itself but a means to achieve a clear goal, a response to impunity for serious crimes, and to prevent the reoccurrence of such crimes. There is no peace without justice.