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Secretary-General

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UNITED NATIONS AMONG PIONEERS IN CRAFTING NEW BODY OF LAW — INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL

JUSTICE — AND ICC NOW ADVANCING 'NOBLE CAUSE', SAYS SECRETARY-GENERAL

Following are UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's remarks on accepting the Justitia Award on behalf of the United Nations at "A Special Night for Justice" dinner, hosted by the Board of Directors of the Special Fund for Victims in Kampala, Uganda, 30 May:

Ambassador Wenaweser, President of the Assembly of State Parties to the Rome Statute, Prosecutor Ferencz, Miss Rehn of the Trust Fund for Victims, Mr. Bazilj of the Cinema for Peace Foundation, former child soldier Jane Ekayu of the Watato Children Choir, Ms. Jagger, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you so much, Ms. Jagger, for that introduction.

You have been a friend to the United Nations for many years.

Your personal bravery is legend; your activism spans the spectrum of human rights, defending indigenous peoples, opposing the death penalty, championing environmental causes around the world.

Thank you for raising your voice in good causes; thank you for your engagement.

There are many others to thank here tonight.

Benjamin Ferencz, let me wish you a belated happy birthday – 90 years young this past March.

You represent continuity between Nuremberg and now. You spent decades pushing for the creation of the International Criminal Court. In you, the world has a great advocate for international justice. As you have said simply yet forcefully, and I quote: "Law. Not War."

Let me also applaud Cinema for Peace. Every time you and our friends from the creative community reach out to help people to learn about human rights and justice, you help the United Nations to keep the peace.

Elisabeth Rehn – I am truly impressed by the work of the Trust Fund for Victims. The involvement of victims is one of the great innovations of the ICC.

Your projects are helping tens of thousands of people in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. You are not just providing microloans and medical care, you are giving hope that there is life even after the darkest days.

Finally, and above all, let me say how inspired I am by Jane Ekayu. You and the other children, on whose behalf you just spoke, are the reason why we are here.

You are why we must bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice. They must know there is no impunity, no safe place to hide from crimes against humanity.

It's a great honour to accept this first Justitia Award on behalf of the United Nations.

Lady Justice has been a presence at the United Nations since our very beginning. The words “international law” are part of our founding Charter.

I thank you for recognizing our decades of work for justice in all its incarnations.

From the tribunals for former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, to the UN-assisted tribunals in Sierra Leone, Cambodia and Lebanon, we are among the pioneers for a new body of law – international criminal justice.

The ICC is the heir to this rich legacy, it is advancing this noble cause.

The United Nations is proud to be the ICC’s close partner.

For we must succeed, not only in Kampala, but anywhere that young people like Jane, or anyone at all, face genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

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