

**SOLEMN UNDERTAKING OF THE DEPUTY PROSECUTOR OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

**Address by Judge Philippe Kirsch  
President of the International Criminal Court**

**(English version)**

**The Hague, 1 November 2004**

Court Officer, could you please escort the Deputy Prosecutor-Elect into the room.

Excellencies, distinguished audience, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the inauguration of Ms. Fatou Bensouda as Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Ms. Bensouda has a long and distinguished record as a criminal law practitioner in her native Gambia. Having begun her career as a Public Prosecutor, she rose to the ranks of Solicitor General, Attorney General, and Secretary of State for Justice. She has extensive experience in international criminal law, having served as a representative of The Gambia at meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the ICC and more recently as Legal Adviser and Trial Attorney at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Ms. Bensouda has demonstrated the ability to make important contributions to the work of the Court. It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we welcome her to the Court.

Today Ms. Bensouda will be inaugurated as Deputy Prosecutor with responsibility for prosecutions. As head of the Prosecution Division, Ms. Bensouda will oversee the Office of the Prosecutor's work in pre-trial, trial, and appellate proceedings.

The election and inauguration of Ms. Bensouda coincides with an important stage in the Court's development – the commencement of the judicial phase of its operations.

One year ago, Mr. Serge Brammertz was inaugurated as the first Deputy Prosecutor of the Court, in charge of investigations. Since that time, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda have referred two situations to the OTP. The Office of the Prosecutor has initiated and continues to conduct investigations in each situation.

The first proceedings could occur at any time now.

Your arrival at the Court is thus quite timely.

Ms. Bensouda,

Today you will solemnly undertake to perform your duties and exercise your powers honorably, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously, and to respect the confidentiality of investigations and prosecutions.

These are words which cannot be taken lightly. The international community has entrusted great hope in the Court. 97 States have so far become Parties to the Rome Statute. Many others continue to support the Court in different ways. The Court must demonstrate that their hope has been well-placed. We can do so only through scrupulous adherence to the principles of fairness, independence, and impartiality.

Monsieur le Greffier vous avez la parole pour votre rapport sur l'élection du Procureur adjoint.