

**Cour
Pénale
Internationale**

**International
Criminal
Court**

**Address by Mr. Bruno Cathala,
Registrar,**

IBA'S prestigious annual Rule of Law Award

Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 26 February 2005

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to receive the IBA'S prestigious annual Rule of Law Award from you today. I am profoundly grateful. Thank you also to Mark Ellis and Francis Neate for their kind words.

I have great pleasure in receiving this award, all the more so as eminent personalities such as Sten Heckscher, Christian Ahlund and Tawanda Mutasah, to name but a few, have come before me.

However, I am fully aware that I am only the hand receiving this award. What has been accomplished so far has been the work of a team that has been reinforced with time and which, from the outset, has maintained that there could be no real justice without a quality defence.

We have also always believed that we could only achieve this objective through dialogue with the professionals based on trust and respect. I am proud to say today that never before in the history of international justice has such broad consultation taken place with representatives of the profession, and this, since the very day we arrived. I must highlight in this respect the remarkable work carried out by the IBA and its representatives during the seminars and consultations.

As was the case with other organisations in various contexts, many of your ideas and proposals have been adopted by the Court in its own internal organisation. You may be aware that a division entitled Division of Victims and Counsel was created within the Registry in order to focus on the unique dimension of defence. The person heading that division is, incidentally, a lawyer.

You also contributed to the complex structure that led to the drafting of the Code of Professional Conduct for counsel. Likewise, as early as 1995, in supporting the creation of this Court, the IBA Council also recommended that special attention be given to ensuring that jurists working there be as representative as possible (IBA Resolution on the Establishment of a Permanent ICC). Today, all the organs of the Court consider this to be of great importance. I therefore encourage you to prompt counsel within your organisation, regardless of their origin, to register on the list of the Court, in particular women in the profession.

If I may, before I finish, recall the guiding principles of the Registry, I would say that we must work to ensure the effective independence of counsel appearing before the Court from all forms of power, and to provide them with sufficient means to be able to carry out their mission in optimal conditions, despite the constraints arising from the environment in which you have to exercise your profession, which is particularly difficult due to the distance between the accused and his or her counsel, victims and their representatives, and the Court and the scene of the crime.

But here again the Registry will not achieve anything just on its own. It is only together with the members of the profession that we will succeed on this long, new and often tiring, but also fascinating journey, as it carries with it the hope of a fairer international society through the success of international criminal justice.