

**Solemn undertaking of the Registrar
of the International Criminal Court**

Thursday, 3 July 2003
The Arc
The Hague, The Netherlands

**Speech pronounced by
Judge Mr. Philippe Kirsch**
President of the ICC

Good afternoon Excellencies, distinguished audience, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the swearing-in ceremony of the first Registrar of the International Criminal Court. On behalf of the Court, I would first like to take this opportunity to thank Eurojust for hosting today's event. This shows the good relationship between our two organisations, both working in the field of international criminal law.

With the Registrar taking up office, the International Criminal Court is now fully constituted. In a period of four months, the three organs of the Court have been elected and have taken their oath: the judges on 11th March, the Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo, on 16th June and today the Registrar, Mr. Bruno Cathala. The Court is now ready to meet the challenges that it will face.

Mr. Bruno Cathala was elected Registrar of the International Criminal Court by an absolute majority of judges in the first round of voting, during the plenary session on 24th June. According to article 43, paragraph 5 of the Rome Statute, he shall hold office for a term of five years. Thanks to the experience he acquired at the ICTY and his excellent work as Director of Common Services here at the ICC, Mr. Cathala possesses all the skills required for the position of Registrar of the International Criminal Court.

Over the last few months, I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Cathala and we have built a relationship of trust and mutual respect. I am thus certain that the close collaboration between the Presidency, the Registry and the Prosecution will continue in a spirit of co-operation and unity.

The Registry is a vital part of the Court. Entrusted with the non-judicial aspects of the administration and servicing of the court, it will have a pivotal role in the participation of victims in trials, the organisation of defence counsel and the establishment of effective co-operation with States. The Registrar's role is thus complex, since it encompasses administrative, judicial and political tasks. I am sure that Mr. Cathala will carry out all these tasks with efficiency and flair.

Today I can assure you, Mr. Cathala, that you have all our support in the fulfilment of your duties, which are so important to this Court. I am delighted that we will be working together towards our common goal of building a Court that is capable of effectively fulfilling its judicial mission.

Our immediate task is to prepare for the influx of work which will begin when the first cases are referred to the Court. The judges have been working conscientiously, in collaboration with the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry, so that we will be ready with a co-ordinated common strategy. I am confident that this collaboration between the three pillars of the court will reinforce the credibility, transparency and efficiency of the International Criminal Court.

I will now give the floor to the Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties.