

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

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

**Speech pronounced by  
Mr. Luis Moreno-Ocampo**  
*Chief Prosecutor*

It is a pleasure and an honour to speak at Bruno Cathalas's inauguration as the first Registrar of the International Criminal Court. Throughout his career, Bruno has displayed unstinting commitment, talent and passion in the pursuit of criminal justice, national and international.

As a member of the judiciary in France, he was formed professionally in a mature national judicial system and he is an expert in the working of an established and sophisticated judicial organisation. He has come to terms, as a judge, with the difficulties entailed in the investigation of cases, the search for evidence, the difficulty involved in establishing the truth in the face of parties who either do not speak the truth or speak it only partially. He is also familiar with the pressures under which criminal investigations are conducted, including threats and attacks.

As Deputy Registrar of the ICTY, he was deeply exposed to the creative demands and manifold pitfalls of administering justice in an international setting. Here everything seems to happen for the first time. Investigations must be conducted in locations distant from the seat of the Court; different and often competing legal traditions and regimes, even notions of justice, must be harmonised and brought to bear. To live through such an experience is to learn from it. As Bruno Cathala once told me, "there is no doubt that we will make mistakes at the ICC, but we must ensure that the mistakes we will make are only new ones", not the old ones.

Many times I have been told that I, as the Prosecutor of the ICC, have the most difficult and lonely job on earth. I am pleased to note today that there is at least someone that has a more difficult job than mine: the Registrar of the International Criminal Court. Because when an organisation runs smoothly and efficiently, no one even notices it. Efficiency is expected and taken for granted. I am afraid that this will also apply to the ICC: we will be thankless when everything functions well; we will blame the Registrar for any mistakes, including our own.

Bruno's new challenges at the ICC are great and many. He must design clear procedures that ensure maximum effectiveness and transparency. He must help accomplish the various tasks of the Court in a cost-effective manner that does not compromise fairness and thoroughness.

No Registrar, no matter how skilful and talented he or she may be, could face alone all the tasks involved. With the expanding requirements of a growing and operational International Criminal Court, the Registrar will need the assistance of an efficient, committed and experienced team with recognized expertise in all relevant areas. Such a team must be at once unswerving in its respect for the rules of the organisation and flexible in its interactions with the Justices, the Office of the Prosecutor, the defence bar, the Assembly of States Parties, the NGOs and the citizens of the world at large that the ICC ultimately serves.

The Registrar must lead that team but must also empower each of its members; he must ensure national and gender diversity as required by the Court and yet foster mutual understanding and respect. The recruitment of such a team is, as we all have experienced by now, a daunting task in itself. The need of an efficient administration for the proper functioning of the Court dictates that this is not an option but a prerequisite.

The Office of the Prosecutor will collaborate to the full extent possible with the Registrar in these tasks.

I have no doubts that Bruno Cathala will be able to perform his duties with creativity, dispatch and skill. I also know that he takes to heart and will fulfil admirably the fundamental part of his mandate, namely respect for both the Defence and for the Office of the Prosecutor and the duty to act impartially between them.

One of the driving forces behind the establishment of the Court was the recognition that many of the victims of repression have no voice and no Court to address the wrongs committed against them. It is vital to remember their plight as the mission of the International Criminal Court is implemented. I am greatly encouraged by Bruno's leadership in emphasizing the respect and deference that the victims command from all of us at the International Criminal Court and the extent to which he has shown himself to be at their service.

I would like to formally welcome Bruno as the new Registrar of the International Criminal Court. I wish him every success and happiness in his new role and I look forward to a long and profitable working relationship with him.