

**CELEBRATIONS OF THE
DAY OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

17 July 2013

ITALY

Statement of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Emma Bonino

Today, 17th of July, we celebrate the *Day of International Criminal Justice* in memory of a founding moment for the promotion of legality, protection of human rights, and punishment of crimes undermining the peaceful coexistence of peoples. On 17th of July 1998 the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court was adopted: an event that many have compared, for historical significance, to the adoption of the United Nations Charter.

Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia and today also Syria: intolerance and violence in the world do not seem to diminish. No Country is immune. However, with the establishment of the Court the international community has refused any acquiescence to atrocities such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well acceptance of any form of impunity for their perpetrators.

There cannot be peace without acknowledgment of serious crimes and conviction of those responsible for them: in a word, without justice for victims. Wounds of the past have to be healed, if we don't want they result in destabilizing infections. The awareness and punishment of committed atrocities are requirements for their final settlement. It is in that light, that the International Criminal Court is an instrument for peace and preventive diplomacy. In many cases, the search for truth has not only delivered justice to victims but also generated a sort of collective catharsis. Thus, the deterrent role of the Court allows the mankind to prevent the recurrence of such brutalities, contributing to establishing the principle of legality, and to assert the principle of the responsibility to protect against the culture of impunity.

The Court has over the years increased its authority and credibility. There are now 122 Countries that have ratified the Statute. The Review Conference of the Rome Statute held in Kampala in 2010 has led to the adoption of some important amendments concerning war crimes and the crime of aggression, susceptible to expand the scope of the Statute. It is for us all, the States Parties, to continue with conviction to provide the Court with the political and financial support it needs. As, without "active" cooperation of the States, without a common commitment and determination for the functioning of the Court, the conquest of the first segment of international criminal jurisdiction would be empty of any content.

Italy promoted the establishment of the Court, and promptly adopted the legislation ratifying the Rome Statute, but it took a decade before adapting the national order to the Statute and establishing the conditions for a full cooperation with the Court. On human rights matters, one should never let his guard down. Therefore, I wish to take the opportunity of this event not only to celebrate, but also to renew to the international criminal justice the support of the institutions and of the Italian society.

It is in this spirit, that I have instructed for the flag of the International Criminal Court to be flown today at the Farnesina Palace, aside those of Italy and of the European Union.

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