



STATEMENT BY WILLIAM R. PACE, CONVENOR
COALITION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

3-4 DECEMBER 2007

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

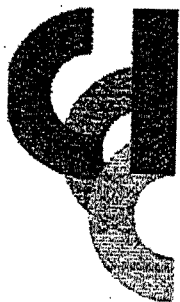
Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Participants,

On behalf of more than 2,500 non-governmental organisations of global civil society who are members of the NGO Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), I am pleased to address the Assembly's general debate at the sixth session.

More than 250 Coalition representatives from over 50 nations from all regions are attending this session. The broad participation of the Coalition at this meeting reflects our longstanding and continued commitment to the ICC.

The Rome Statute now has 105 States Parties. We congratulate Japan and Chad for joining the State Parties to the Statute this year. With more than two-thirds of the world's nations having signed, ratified and acceded to the ICC treaty, there is a clear movement towards universal acceptance. The CICC encourages all States to take steps to ratify or accede to the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities (APIC), and observer countries and other non-States Parties to join the Rome Statute system, and for all States to offer technical assistance to countries working toward that goal.

The Rome Statute and the ICC is arguably the most successful achievement in the so-called new peace and security architecture in the post Cold War era and has achieved considerable progress over the past year. The Court has issued additional arrest



warrants, opened a fourth investigation, advanced significantly judicially and strengthened its presence in the situation countries. This progress was reflected in the substance and transparency of the reports by the ICC President and Prosecutor on the first day, which received positive responses from many NGOs.

Mr. President, the CICC and members of civil society contribute to almost every aspect of the work of the Court and ASP here at the United Nations in New York, in The Hague, in capitals around the world, and in the countries where the ICC is proceeding with investigations and prosecutions. It is important that in asking NGOs to provide important services, we are not expected to do for the ICC what it should be doing itself, primarily due to lack of NGO resources or the complexity of the challenge. But while resources, security and independence are our key concerns, the commitment of Coalition members to the Rome Statute and to a fair, effective and independent ICC remains strong.

Our many issue teams, sectoral caucuses, national coalitions and regional networks have been preparing for months for the sixth ASP. Ours is not a negotiating but a consultative role, sharing our diverse experience and expertise not only on the issues on the agenda, but also on all other issues relevant to the implementation of the system established in Rome in 1998. From twenty-five organisations in February 1995 to 800 at the time of the Rome Conference in 1998, the CICC now comprises over 2,500 members, with some 400 new members from Africa, the Middle East and Asia in the last two years. We appreciate the constructive arrangements that the Assembly, its Secretariat, and the ICC have established with the CICC. As part of fulfilling our consultative role at this session, a number of position papers and reports have been issued by CICC Teams, members and Secretariat and made available to governments. These papers are built on thorough research and expertise from civil society organisations who are involved in the Rome Statute system on a daily basis. I encourage you to consult these papers throughout your deliberations at this session.



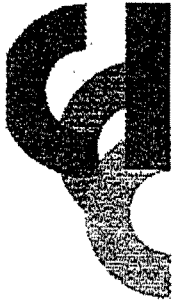
While progress has been achieved, the Court still urgently requires increased state cooperation, operational support and unconditional fulfillment of States' legal obligations under the Rome Statute and other international treaties. [The importance of cooperation will be addressed in subsequent speeches by CICC members]. Now is the time to build momentum for continuous and consistent public support for the Court, in and through all relevant bilateral and international efforts, including the United Nations, and other international and regional organisations. We welcome the strong report from and important efforts by The Hague and New York Working Groups, lead by Ambassador Biering of Denmark and Ms. Schwachofer of the Netherlands.

Fair trial, due process and equality of arms are inherent principles of the Rome Statute system and thus fundamental to the goals of the CICC. These values should be reflected in all ASP decisions, and in particular through the approval of the Court's budget for legal aid and in the deliberations on the definition of the Crime of Aggression.

Also at this ASP, decisions will be made on the upcoming Review Conference. The ASP must provide for adequately strategic and formal planning and preparatory processes in terms of venue and agenda, reflecting and respecting the historic value of the Rome Statute. The CICC expects a high-level 2010 Review Conference with a broad scope, including stocktaking and commitment making.

The Rome Statute system is an important tool for gender justice. We encourage all States to commit to gender justice through, among other, full incorporation of gender inclusive provisions in implementation legislation and supporting the achievement of gender balance at all levels, in particular senior levels, of ICC staff and closely monitoring the ICC in achieving its gender standards.

Recent progress of the Court's work leads to the increased importance of timely and full payment of States' contributions to the Court's budget. States should support the Trust Fund for Victims through future generous and regular contributions. The Least Developed Countries (LDC) Trust Fund should also be supported. Additionally, the



recent investments in outreach and the strengthening of the field offices have concretely contributed to the Court's overall functioning, international legitimacy and local relevance and such investments deserve States' continued support.

Mr. President, the Rome Statute took at least nine years from draft to entry into force. The full establishment of the new system will require decades, and not merely five years. It is a permanent system requiring continued investment, support and involvement of a large number of actors, the Court being one of them. The Court has come far in terms of building a basic institution ready to fulfil its mandate. States, international organisations, and other actors must ensure that they keep up with the ICC regarding their obligations to the Rome Statute system.

We welcome and congratulate the Assembly on the elections of new judges and members of the Committee on Budget and Finance, and note that an even much greater number of elections will occur at the seventh session and the CICC and its members will be making all efforts to ensure the election of the highest qualified candidates through a fair and transparent process.

The statement that the CICC is distributing contains a number of additional issues that the time limitation has not allowed us to raise in our oral intervention, and we ask State Parties to consider these.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the Rome Statute and the ICC truly represent one of the greatest attempts to fulfil the first preambular promises of the UN Charter. We look forward to continuing to working with you and the Assembly.