

**Strong Support for the International Criminal Court at the
Millennium Summit in New York:
Twenty Heads of State Emphasize the Importance of the Court
(6-8 September 2000)**

From 6 to 8 September 2000, Heads of State of the 189 Member States of the United Nations gathered at UN Headquarters in New York for the historic Millennium Summit. The Summit—the largest single gathering of Heads of State ever held in the world—served as a historic opportunity to discuss the role of the United Nations to effectively address the problems facing the world in the new century.

Statements were issued by Heads of State expressing their respective views on today's and tomorrow's challenges. Many Heads of State expressed the belief that the International Criminal Court (ICC) would be an indispensable instrument in the enforcement of international humanitarian law and thereby manifested the international community's commitment to the establishment of an effective and independent ICC. Some urged immediate widespread ratification, others announced their own State's intention to ratify promptly. The following are excerpts of the statements that make clear the positive and crucial role of the ICC in the new millennium:

- **Argentina** – H.E. Mr. Fernando de la Rúa, President of Argentina
“Can the United Nations remain indifferent to those violations within the border of a State? There is no simple answer. The matter is linked to questions of sovereignty and territorial integrity. But a complementary value should be added: ‘the principle of non-indifference.’ Those who commit war crimes cannot go unpunished. The creation of the International Criminal Court and other international courts is therefore *an indispensable component of stable and fair peace.*”

- **Austria** – H.E. Mr. Thomas Klestil, Federal President of the Republic of Austria
“Today it might well be unthinkable to deal with any one of these global issues without the participation and contributions by civil society... The successful completion of the negotiations for the landmines treaty as well as the Rome process towards an International Criminal Court would not have been possible without the truly innovative and productive response on their part.”

- **Canada** – H.E. Mr. Jean Chretien, Prime Minister of Canada
 “We must work harder to deny the agents of violence and conflict their sources of supply... We must keep moving ahead with initiatives that put the security of people first. The Ottawa Treaty on Landmines and the Statute of the International Criminal Court are *milestones marking our way.*”
- **Chile** – H.E. Mr. Ricardo Lagos Escobar, President of the Republic of Chile
 “Globalization carries with it responsibilities and Chile has assumed its responsibilities without hesitation. As evidence of this, we have committed ourselves to disarmament policies; to United Nations peacekeeping forces; to the International Criminal Court; to regional and universal instruments for the defense of human rights and democracy...”
- **Croatia** – H.E. Mr. Stipe Mesic, President of the Republic of Croatia
 “Speaking of undertakings, one of the vehicles of which can help us best in arranging this world is certainly international law, and in this regard the role of the UN and of the Secretary General as the depositary of more than 500 treaties is of irreplaceable and invaluable significance. In endeavoring to safeguard and reinforce the elementary norms of international humanitarian law, the Security Council has also established ad hoc tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. However, *genuine progress towards the universal protection will be achieved through the International Criminal Court.*”
- **Djibouti** – H.E. Mr. Ismael Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti
 “Today the major threat to peace and security is no more the external aggression between States, but the internal violence perpetrated against communities and individuals... The incredible savagery of some of the conflicts, and the unacceptable sufferings inflicted, compel us to find the ways to help our fellows. In this way, we must activate and urgently use the new International Criminal Court, in order to make appear criminals that defy the laws before justice.”
- **Germany** – H.E. Mr. Gerhard Schroeder, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany
 “The German Government *strongly advocates the early entry into force of the Statute of the International Criminal Court* which is to try cases involving the most serious crimes, such as genocide.”
- **Italy** – Prof. Giuliano Amato, Prime Minister of the Italian Republic
 “Another key point is *the effective defense of universal human rights*, as a guarantee of a fairer and more democratic international system. We have made progress in recent years in this respect, but much more can be achieved, especially once that we reach the required number of ratifications for the Rome Treaty establishing the International Criminal Court.”
- **Liechtenstein** – H.E. Mr. Mario Frick, Prime Minister of the Principality of Liechtenstein
 “Within the group of Like-Minded countries, Liechtenstein participated actively in the work to create the International Criminal Court, *one of the outstanding achievements in*

the area of international law, and we hope that the Court will become operational soon. The ICC will lead to full accountability for the commission of the most serious crimes under international law and it has a strong potential to help prevent conflicts.”

- **Mali** – H.E. Mr. Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali
“The prevention of murderous conflicts, the application of conventions on human rights and international humanitarian law, and the protection of the most vulnerable, necessitate the entry into force of the Statute of the International Criminal Court. We must end impunity so as to protect people and communities from violence.”
- **Netherlands** – H.E. Mr. Wim Kok, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Netherlands
“The international rule of law needs to be strengthened. The International Court of Justice, the Yugoslavia Tribunal and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, all located in The Hague, contribute to that goal. In the near future, they will be joined by the International Criminal Court.”
- **New Zealand** – Her Excellency The Right Hon. Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand
“[New Zealand has] participated actively in the development of international law. This year we have responded to the Secretary General’s request to member States to sign or ratify as many of the 25 core treaties as possible... [A]t this summit, we are carrying out seven fresh treaty actions, including signature, ratification, or accession to five of the 25 core treaties. This week we are ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.”
- **Norway** – H.M. King Harald V, King of Norway
“The United Nations should be empowered to provide post-conflict rehabilitation, to alleviate the suffering and protect the rights of innocent civilians, of innocent women and children, to punish genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.”
- **San Marino** – Her Excellency Maria Domenica Michelotti and H.E. Gian Marco Marcucci, Captains Regents of the Republic of San Marino
“San Marino is committed to the International Criminal Court, it has strongly supported the abolition of the death penalty worldwide, and has constantly participated in international solidarity projects to alleviate the suffering of man women and children.”
- **Samoa** – H.E. Mr. Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Chairman of the Delegation of Samoa
“Samoa believes most strongly in the need for and the purposes of the International Criminal Court, and will continue to play its part in the development of the Court. Humanity needs more than ever *a fair, effective and independent instrument of international criminal justice.*”
- **Slovakia** – H.E. Mr. Mikuláš Dzurinda, Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic
“Standing on the threshold of the new century, the international community must focus its endeavors on ensuring full respect for international law and, in particular, human rights, whose violations have recently been grave and numerous. Hence, Slovakia fully

supports the expedient constitution of an International Criminal Court and subscribes to the Secretary General's appeal *to put an end to the culture of impunity.*"

- **Somalia** – H.E. Mr. Abdikassim Salad Hassan, President of the Somali Republic
“The new Somalia and its Third Republic are wanting to re-dedicate themselves to an international legal framework which values the rights of the child, is committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and is ready to pledge full support for the effective institutionalization of the International Criminal Court in Rome.”
- **Spain** – H.E. José María Aznar, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain
“Needless to say, Spain will vigorously support any and all efforts to find consensus solutions and uphold agreements. Specifically, ratification by my country of the Rome Treaty establishing an International Criminal Court is very near and we trust that it will be implemented promptly.”
- **Switzerland** – H.E. Mr. Adolf Ogi, President of the Swiss Confederation
“It has become difficult to ensure respect for international humanitarian law... We must explore new approaches, create and develop new tools, maybe even new structures within the United Nations. Let's seek out and punish the guilty! During the conflicts, certainly after the conflicts, after the terror, after the intolerance. This is the reason why *I welcome the ongoing efforts to establish an International Criminal Court in the nearest possible future and to preserve its integrity.*”
- **Trinidad & Tobago** – H.E. Mr. Basdeo Panday, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago
“We record our appreciation for the United Nation's positive response when Trinidad & Tobago moved to revive the concept of the establishment of a Permanent International Criminal Court. It is our firm conviction that the crime of illicit drug trafficking should be included in the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.”