

## **For Immediate Release**

### **AU: African States Should Increase Support for Justice**

(Johannesburg, January 26, 2012) – Over 30 civil society organizations from close to 20 African countries wrote today to African member countries of the [International Criminal Court](#) (ICC) urging their renewed support for the court’s efforts to combat grave international crimes. The letter was sent on prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> summit of the African Union (AU), which will take place on January 29 and 30 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The organizations [wrote](#) that it was of crucial importance for African governments and the AU to provide concrete support for the ICC, particularly given the challenges facing the court and the current focus of its investigations in Africa.

African countries should work toward improved relations between the ICC and the AU, enforce the court’s decisions, respect their obligations under the ICC Statute, and support prosecutions of international crimes before their national courts. The election of a highly qualified African, Fatou Bensouda, as the new ICC prosecutor was a positive development, the organizations said.

“The ICC needs full cooperation from states to effectively curb impunity for the worst international crimes,” said Oby Nwankwo, Executive Director of the Civil Resource Development and Document Centre in Nigeria. “It is high time African governments and the AU put themselves on the right side of history and support justice for victims, not abusive leaders.”

#### **The organizations that signed the letter are:**

1. Action of Christian Activists for Human Rights in Shabunda (ACADHOSHA), Democratic Republic of Congo
2. African Assembly for the Defense of Human Rights (RADDHO), Senegal
3. African Association for Human Rights (ASADHO), Democratic Republic of Congo
4. Amnesty International, Ghana
5. Amnesty International, Senegal
6. Amnesty International, Togo
7. Association of Human and Prisoner Rights (ADHUC), Brazzaville, Republic of Congo
8. Benin Coalition for the ICC, Benin
9. Burundi Coalition for the ICC, Burundi
10. Cameroon Coalition for the ICC, Cameroon
11. Central African Republic Coalition for the ICC, CAR
12. Centre for Accountability and Rule of Law, Sierra Leone
13. Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), Malawi
14. Children Education Society(CHESO), Tanzania
15. Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre (CIRDDOC), Nigeria
16. Club of Friends of Congolese Law, Democratic Republic of Congo
17. Coalition of Eastern NGOs (CENGOS), Nigeria
18. Coalition for the International Criminal Court, with offices in Benin and the Democratic Republic of Congo
19. Congolese Coalition for Transitional Justice (CCJT), Democratic Republic of Congo
20. Congolese Initiative for Justice and Peace (ICJP), Democratic Republic of Congo

21. Human Rights Network-Uganda (HURINET), Uganda
22. Human Rights Watch, with offices in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda and South Africa
23. International Commission of Jurists, Kenya
24. International Crime in Africa Programme (ICAP), Institute for Security Studies (ISS), South Africa
25. Ivorian Coalition for the ICC, Côte d'Ivoire
26. League for Peace, Human Rights and Justice (LIPADHOJ), Democratic Republic of Congo
27. National Coalition on Affirmative Action (NCAA), Nigeria
28. Network of Human Rights Associations from Sud Kivu (RADHOSKI), Democratic Republic of Congo
29. Nigeria Coalition on the ICC (NCICC), Nigeria
30. Speak Human Rights & Environmental Initiative, Mauritius
31. Southern Africa Litigation Centre, South Africa
32. Synergy of Congolese NGOs for Victims (SYCOVI), Democratic Republic of Congo
33. Uganda Coalition on the International Criminal Court, Uganda
34. West African Bar Association (WABA), Nigeria

**To read the letter, please visit:** <http://www.hrw.org/node/104825>

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