



# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

Commission internationale de juristes - Comisión Internacional de Juristas

*" dedicated since 1952 to the primacy, coherence and implementation of international law and principles that advance human rights "*

## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE – COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

For immediate release

17 July 2009

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### **ICJ: Fight against impunity must be continued on International Justice Day**

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) welcomes International Justice Day 2009. "The fight against impunity and for international justice has made positive progress in the last decade, not least with the commencement of the first cases at the International Criminal Court. Nevertheless, international justice continues to encounter obstacles in its development. The ICJ, the legal community and all the human rights movement must continue their efforts to attain universal justice and an end to impunity", the ICJ said.

The ICJ reiterates that all States have the right under international law to prosecute and try people responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, and other crimes under international law, such as torture, extrajudicial execution and enforced disappearances, regardless of the nationality of the victim or the alleged perpetrators or the territory where the crimes were committed. The ICJ also recalls that, in cases where the alleged offender is present in any territory under its jurisdiction, the State has the imperative international obligation to extradite or to bring the accused to its own national courts.

The ICJ is deeply concerned at the African Union's decision inviting Member States not to enforce the Arrest Warrant delivered by the Pre-Trial Chamber of the International Criminal Court against Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir. "Such a decision encourages African States, which are Members of the United Nations and the International Criminal Court, to defy their obligations under the UN Charter and the Rome Statute", said the ICJ, "The ICJ calls on the African Union and its Member States to retract this position and re-align themselves with their international law obligations."

"The ICJ encourages States to enact laws allowing their national tribunals to prosecute, try and punish those responsible of crimes under international law in application of the principle of universal jurisdiction", said the ICJ. The ICJ is concerned at the recent initiative of the Spanish Parliament to limit its universal jurisdiction.

The ICJ commends the ratification by 109 States of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The ICJ invites all remaining States to ratify or accede to the Rome Statute. "The International Criminal Court is an instrument of paramount importance for international justice. The ICJ supports the Court's work and welcomes the commencement of its first cases", said the ICJ, "Universal ratification of the Rome Statute is fundamental in contributing to end impunity."

*For further information contact + 41 22 979 3800*

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

33, rue des Bains, P.O. Box 91, 1211 Geneva 8, Switzerland  
Tel: +41(0) 22 979 3800 – Fax: +41(0) 22 979 3801 – Website: <http://www.icj.org> - E-mail: [info@icj.org](mailto:info@icj.org)