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## COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE - COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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### **Sudan: A significant step forward towards ending impunity in Darfur: ICC Prosecutor Presents case against Sudanese President for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes**

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) said today that the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo to present a case to the Pre-Trial Chamber I of the ICC against the President of Sudan, Omar Hassan Ahmad AL BASHIR, for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes is a significant step forward towards ending impunity and bringing justice to victims in Darfur.

The Conflict in Darfur erupted in early 2003 and since then more than 200.000 peoples have been killed and 2 million people have been displaced either as internally displaced persons or as refugees. Most of victims were members of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa groups, and have been attacked on the basis of their ethnicity. These crimes have been committed by the Janjaweed armed militia supported actively and directly by the Sudanese Government and Armed Forces. The evidence collected by the ICC Prosecutor show that Sudanese armed forces and the Militia/Janjaweed controlled by the President AL BASHIR attacked civilians in towns and villages inhabited by the target groups, committing killings, rapes, torture and destroying means of livelihood.

*" Not only has the Sudanese Government failed to protect the civilians, but according to the evidence collected by the ICC's Prosecutor, President AL BASHIR intends to destroy in substantial part the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa ethnic groups as such and ordered to commit several crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur",* said Saïd Benarbia, ICJ Legal Officer for the Middle East and North Africa.

Sudanese Government must cooperate fully and immediately with the ICC and its Prosecutor. *"It is a well recognized principle of international criminal law that the quality of Head of State or Government shall in no case exempt a person from criminal responsibility for crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes",* added Saïd Benarbia.

The Sudanese government must comply with UN Security Council resolutions, especially Resolutions 1769 and 1593, and fully cooperate with the ICC and its investigation of the situation in Darfur. The ICJ urged the Sudanese Government to protect the civilian population in Darfur from all forms of intimidation and reprisals: *"It's the obligation and the responsibility of the Sudanese Government to protect the civilian population in Darfur. The Government of Sudan must be held accountable for any retaliation or reprisal against the civilian population in Darfur ",* said Saïd Benarbia.

The ICJ also urged the international community, especially the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, to take the necessary measures to protect civilians, safeguard the rights of

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)

victims and bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, genocide and war crimes committed in Darfur.

*For interviews and more information, please contact Saïd Benarbia, Middle East & North Africa Legal Officer, at + 41 76 588 33 62 (interviews in Arabic, French and English).*