

International Seminar on the International Criminal Court

**Haikou, Hainan, in the People's Republic of China
9-12 February 2003**

This seminar was co-organized by the Research Center for Criminal Jurisprudence (RCCJ) at the Renmin University of China in Beijing and the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) based in Hong Kong SAR. Professor Zhao Bingzhi, director of the RCCJ and vice-dean of the Law School at the Renmin University, closed the seminar with the following remarks, and ALRC would like to share them with its network and media.

I would like to assess the significance of this seminar by looking at three aspects.

First, while focusing on a very important issue, this international seminar is forward-looking and opening up new frontiers. Undoubtedly, the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and its entry in force on 1 July 2002 are new and very important issues which cannot be ignored by every country considering the globalization of cooperation in economic, political and legal affairs. Although China has not ratified or acceded to the Rome Statute of the ICC, as a responsible and a large developing country that has been carrying out economic and legal reform, China has been paying close attention to the establishment and operation of the ICC. To carry out in-depth study on the major issues relating to the ICC has a very important and realistic meaning for China. This is the first international seminar focusing on the ICC held in China.

Second, the international seminar received great attention with wide and active participation. The two co-organizers and two co-hosts are important and influential bodies. The Research Center of Criminal Jurisprudence of Renmin University is the only research agency established under the approval of the Ministry of Education as the national focal point in the study of criminal law. In recent years, it has been playing an important function in the development of criminal jurisprudence and legal construction in criminal law. The other organizer, the Asian Legal Resource Centre, is an important academic agency that commits itself to promoting understanding of international legal development in relation to the United Nations, including the ICC. For many years, it has established a close relationship with the Chinese legal community and the Supreme People's Court of China in terms of legal exchange and cooperation. The two co-hosts, Hainan University and the Southwest University of Politics and Law are famous universities in China.

The Research Center of Criminal Jurisprudence of Renmin University and the Asian Legal Resource Centre held several meetings and worked seriously to prepare for the seminar. The Hainan University and the Southwest University of Politics and Law provided great support for this seminar. All these contributed to its success. The Chinese and foreign legal communities attached great importance to the seminar and participated actively. There were about sixty participants. Including the number of post-graduate and undergraduate students of the Hainan University, there were more than one hundred people taking part in this important seminar. Among the participants, about ten were experts and scholars from foreign countries, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and Macau Special Administrative Region. Participants from

mainland China included experts from the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Public Security Ministry, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, famous scholars and young intellectuals from more than ten law schools, universities and research agencies; and a number of officials and personnel with expertise from the political and legal bodies of Hainan province. The wide representation and high expertise of participants was the main guarantee of the success of this seminar.

Furthermore, this was a high-standard international seminar with plenty of fruit. Forty-three Chinese and English papers were submitted to the seminar. These papers were concerned with different aspects of the ICC. The organizers divided the papers into the following areas:

- Fundamental theories on the ICC;
- Issues concerning the jurisdiction of the ICC;
- Crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC;
- The jurisdiction of the ICC and criminal responsibility;
- Norms of international criminal law in Chinese criminal law and the practice;
- China and the ICC, and,
- The operating mechanism of the ICC.

During the seminar, participants presented their papers and discussed them vigorously. The ICC is a very difficult subject that requires high expertise. Considering the existing lack of study on this subject in China, it is very significant to have so many high-standard papers with original ideas. Regarding the discussion on the norms of international criminal law in Chinese criminal law and the relationship between China and the ICC, it was not only very useful to both Chinese and foreign experts and scholars in understanding the norms, theories and practices in China, but also very important to the theoretical studies concerning how to improve the incorporation of the norms of international criminal law into Chinese domestic law, as well as rational examination of the issues relating to the ICC. Based on the standard of the papers presented and the discussion during the seminar, we can say that it was a high-standard international seminar.

Based on the above three observations, we can recognise that this international seminar has great meaning and is a significant contribution to this field of study. During the seminar, Chinese and foreign legal experts were taking part in an effective scholarly exchange on different aspects concerning the ICC. Through their studies, the Chinese experts and scholars have raised the level of Chinese study on the ICC. The seminar and the views presented will have positive influence upon the Chinese legal studies. As a whole, this seminar is successful and satisfactory. It will leave its footprints clearly on the road of exploring the theories and the practices of the ICC in China, Asia and the world.

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