



## **Press Statement**

The Uganda Coalition for the International Criminal Court (UCICC) is a membership Non government organisation with 214 Civil Society Organisations and Community Based Organisation. Formed in 2004, with the objectives to: sensitize and clarify the role of the ICC and create a platform for debate on the ICC.

UCICC welcomes information relating to the arrest of Mr. Jean Pierre Bemba Gombo. The Pre-Trial Chamber III issued a sealed warrant of arrest for Mr. Jean Pierre Bemba for war crimes and crimes against humanity. These were allegedly committed in the Central African Republic in the localities of PK 12, Bossongoa, and Mongoumba between 25 October, 2002 to 15 March 2003. The unsealing of the warrants by the Pre trial Chamber led to his arrest by the Belgian authorities.

The UCICC acknowledges the efforts of the ICC in its pursuit to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes in the Central African Republic. The work of the ICC is daunting, especially amidst the myriad of challenges it faces in executing arrests of those charged with crimes within its jurisdiction. The UCICC therefore applauds the Belgian authorities in cooperating with the ICC in effecting the arrest warrants against Mr. Bemba. UCICC calls upon state parties to the Rome Statute to cooperate with the ICC to ensure that all outstanding warrants of arrest are executed.

The arrest of Jean Pierre Bemba by an ICC state party draws significant, lessons to be learned by other countries like Uganda. States should not harbor perpetrators of crime. It is the state's responsibility to protect its people, and it follows that either the State acts, or cooperates with the ICC in a bid to fight impunity.

The UCICC also appreciates press reports relating to the appointment of three judges to the War Crimes Court, which is to be a special division of the High Court of Uganda. The UCICC believes that this is a positive step in the fight against impunity and the development of the principle and practice of complementarity. However, we call upon Government to provide all the necessary support needed to get the War Crimes Court fully working, and at the same time expedite the enactment of the ICC Bill 2006 into Law.

ROSE NAKAYI

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rose Nakayi', with a date '08/08' written to the right of the signature.

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**Coordinator UCICC**