

For Immediate Distribution
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Press Statement

“The ‘lump of coal’ delivered by US Ambassador to the UN John Bolton just before Christmas regarding the final text of the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Resolution currently being debated in the UN Security Council once again puts the US into a totally isolated and unhelpful position. With its continued refusal to acknowledge the International Criminal Court (ICC) in this resolution, the United States reveals a real lack of diplomacy, leadership and, worst of all, an obstructive attitude towards ending impunity.

The UN Security Council’s recognition of the historic importance of the ICC in the protection of civilians dates back to its Council’s original resolution on the protection of civilians in armed conflict from 1999 (SC Res. 1265). UN Security Council Resolution 1593 in March 2005, which referred the situation in Darfur to the ICC, set a powerful and meaningful precedent at the United Nations. In light of the recognized importance of the ICC to the protection of populations suffering from some of the world’s worst crimes including genocide, this “lump of coal” from Ambassador Bolton is a most unwelcome Christmas gift. We hope this debate will be turned around when the Council resumes its discussion on the resolution in January.”

- **William R. Pace is the Convenor of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, a network established in 1995 that now represents over 2,000 civil society organizations that work to promote a fair, effective and independent International Criminal Court**

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Notes for Editors:

1. The ICC is the world’s first permanent global criminal court. It is an independent body and was established in The Hague, the Netherlands on 1 July 2002 when the ICC treaty came into force. The ICC does not have jurisdiction over crimes prior to that date.
2. With Mexico’s ratification of the ICC treaty on 28 October 2005, there is now a total of 100 States Parties to the ICC.
3. The Court is currently investigating cases in Darfur, Sudan; the Democratic Republic of Congo; and Uganda. The ICC Prosecutor’s office is also analyzing eight situations on four continents including the Central African Republic and Cote d’Ivoire. The ICC unsealed its first arrest warrants for five top leaders of the Ugandan Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) on 13 October 2005.
3. The CICC is *not* an organ of the Court but rather an independent NGO network of more than 2,000 civil society organizations working to promote a fair, effective and independent ICC. The CICC was established in February 1995 and has offices in New York City and The Hague as well as seven regional offices around the world. For more information: www.iccnw.org

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