



वकालत मञ्च-नेपाल
ADVOCACY FORUM- NEPAL
Lawyers forum for human rights and rule of law

Press statement

17 July 2020

Kathmandu, Nepal

**On the occasion of International Justice Day -
Advocacy Forum-Nepal Urges Government to Ratify Rome Statute**

Globally, 17 July is commemorated as the International Criminal Justice Day in recognition of the adoption of the Rome Statute on 17 July 1998. On this occasion, Advocacy Forum-Nepal (AF) pledges its support to the strengthening of the international criminal justice system and calls upon all the stakeholders to act together to end impunity for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression, established by the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Statute of the ICC, despite being a relatively new instrument, is a milestone in furthering the protection and promotion of human rights at the international level. The endowment of individual criminal responsibility for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression is a distinctive feature of the Court whereby the perpetrator bears the responsibility individually, instead of the State as designed by international measures. The Statute aims to prosecute the perpetrators of those 4 international crimes under the Court and provide justice to the victims (when the national system is unwilling and unable to prosecute the perpetrators) at an international level.

With 139 state parties to the Statute, the Court is a symbol of international criminal justice and a strong symbol that crimes cannot go unpunished, even if domestic jurisdictions fail to prosecute and punish perpetrators. However, the issue of jurisdiction and voluntary submission of the states pose a considerable barrier for the Court to prosecute individuals and administer justice. Therefore, to support the international criminal justice system, AF urges the Government of Nepal to voluntarily submit to the jurisdiction of the Court by immediate ratification of the Rome Statute. AF stresses that the ratification not only pledges Nepal's support to international justice and accountability but also deters the future commission of such crimes within the territory of Nepal. AF stresses the globally accepted norm that accountability for international crimes is a foundation of a just society and further urges the Government of Nepal to ratify the Rome Statute.

In order to adhere to the commitment to human rights enshrined in the Constitution of Nepal and the repeated proclamations of commitment to human rights and rule of law at national and international forums and to ensure the non-repetition of the atrocities of the past (1996-2006), AF draws the attention of the Government to the necessity to acknowledge and submit to the jurisdiction of the Court.

Om Prakash Sen Thakuri
Director
Advocacy Forum - Nepal