



PUBLIC STATEMENT

15 September 2010

AI Index: EUR 59/002/2010

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL URGES PRESIDENT TO APPROVE MOLDOVA'S RATIFICATION OF THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Today, Amnesty International wrote to Acting President Mihai Ghimpu urging him to take steps to ensure that Moldova ratifies the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Rome Statute) as soon as possible.

The letter follows a decision on 9 September 2010 by the Moldovan Parliament to approve a law providing for the ratification.

"Parliamentarians' strong support for the ratification bill illustrates their commitment to international justice and ensuring that Moldova contributes to ending impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes," said Christopher Keith Hall, Senior Legal Adviser at Amnesty International

The ratification process in Moldova has taken a number of years to reach this stage. In October 2007, following an examination of the Rome Statute, the Constitutional Court determined that no constitutional amendments were necessary for the government to ratify. In January 2008, the ratification bill was sent to parliament.

"All that now remains is for the Acting President to approve the law and for the government to deposit Moldova's instrument of ratification at the United Nations Headquarters in New York," said Christopher Keith Hall. "We hope this process will be completed expeditiously."

Amnesty International Moldova and other national civil society organizations working as a national coalition have campaigned strongly for Moldova's ratification in recent years.

"With Moldova's ratification likely to be imminent, it is important that the government also starts a process to review its national laws ensuring that it can meet its obligations under the Rome Statute to investigate and prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes effectively before its national courts and cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court," said Christopher Keith Hall. "This process should be transparent and include consultation with civil society."

Amnesty International also called on Moldova to take prompt steps to ratify the separate Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court.

Background

The International Criminal Court was established on 1 July 2002 to investigate and prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The Court can only step in to investigate and prosecute these crimes when the national authorities are unable or unwilling genuinely to do so.

States that ratify the Rome Statute demonstrate their support for international justice and commit themselves to investigating and prosecuting the crimes in their national courts and to cooperating fully with the Court.

To date, 113 states – almost two-thirds of the international community - have ratified the Rome Statute.

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