

**Cour
Pénale
Internationale**



**International
Criminal
Court**

**Judge Sang-Hyun Song
President of the International Criminal Court**

*Remarks at Ceremony on the Occasion of Signing the
Memorandum of Understanding
between the International Criminal Court and the Commonwealth
on Cooperation*

*Sydney, Australia
13 July 2011*

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank Secretary-General Sharma for his wonderful remarks, which covered the ground so well that there is little that I need to add.

To sign a historic Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between the International Criminal Court and the Commonwealth Secretariat is a great honour in itself.

But to have the opportunity to do so during the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting, in the presence of the distinguished representatives of so many countries from all continents of the world, makes the occasion truly special.

Your meeting here in Sydney symbolises in a very fitting way the connection between the Commonwealth and the ICC. Both organisations represent the voluntary gathering of states around the common values of peace, human rights and the rule of law.

In the last two decades, international criminal justice has emerged as a major tool for the attainment of those goals. The world has come to recognise that there can be no sustainable peace without accountability.

Your national jurisdictions are the first line of defence against impunity for mass atrocities. The ICC is a safety net, a court of last resort.

For justice to prevail, we need to develop the national and international elements in parallel. The Commonwealth is uniquely placed to facilitate that process.

I greatly appreciate everything that the Commonwealth Secretariat has done to promote the development and implementation of international criminal law. The recent work to revise the Commonwealth Model Law on Implementation of the Rome Statute provides a case in point.

I am also grateful to all the individual Commonwealth member states for their support to the ICC. The majority of Commonwealth countries are already parties to the Rome Statute, including three which joined last year – Bangladesh, Seychelles and St. Lucia. I hope the same pace will continue this year and beyond, since Grenada has already deposited its instrument of accession and Malaysia and the Maldives have announced their intention to join.

As we can see, the ties between the ICC and the Commonwealth are strengthening on many levels.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for honouring this ceremony with your presence.

Mr. Secretary-General, I thank you and the Commonwealth for your willingness to conclude the Memorandum of Understanding with the International Criminal Court, and I look forward to developing our cooperation on the basis of this important agreement.

Thank you.