

MEDIA RELEASE
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CIVIL SOCIETY CALLS ON PRESIDENT ZUMA TO COOPERATE WITH ICC

Several South African civil society organisations and many concerned individuals have endorsed a statement calling upon President Jacob Zuma to honour South Africa's treaty obligations by cooperating with the International Criminal Court (ICC) in relation to the warrant of arrest issued for President Omar al-Bashir of The Sudan.

Virtually all of South Africa's leading human rights organisations, including the South African Human Rights Commission, have united around the call for South Africa's government to respect its own law and Constitution and to disassociate itself from the AU decision to refuse cooperation with the ICC.

The South African based organisations that have endorsed the statement are:

- Aids Consortium
- Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS)
- Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, Pretoria University
- Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
- Centre for the Study of Violence & Reconciliation (CSVSR)
- Human Rights Institute of South Africa (HURISA)
- International Centre for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
- International Crime in Africa Programme, Institute for Security Studies (ISS)
- Khulumani Support Group
- Legal Resources Centre (LRC)
- Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR)
- Open Society Foundation of SA (OSF-SA)
- Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA)
- Sonke Gender Justice Network
- South African History Archive (SAHA)
- South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)
- Southern African Litigation Centre (SALC)

Prominent South Africans who have endorsed the statement include:

- The Most Reverend Desmond Mpilo Tutu, former Chairperson of the TRC
- Richard Goldstone, former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; former judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
- Advocate Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza SC, former Commissioner on the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur appointed pursuant to UN Resolution 1564
- Professor Kader Asmal, Former Minister and Honorary Professor UCT and UWC
- Professor Hugh Corder, Professor of Public law, UCT
- Yasmin Sooka, former TRC Commissioner
- Professor John Dugard, Centre for Human Rights, Pretoria University

- Jody Kollapen, Chairperson of the South African Human Rights Commission
- Professor Karthy Govender, Commissioner of the South African Human Rights Commission and Professor of Law, University of KwaZulu Natal

Comfort Ero, Director of the South African office of the ICTJ said that “the statement is intended to convey to the government the extent of opposition from civil society organizations for South Africa’s decision not to comply with its national and international legal obligations”. She added that this decision “impacts profoundly on the rule of law, both locally and internationally. We seek a commitment from the SA government that it will comply with the letter of the law in this regard. We await this clarification and we will then decide how to further engage and respond”.

The statement is attached. The statement has also drawn support from a number of foreign based organisations and concerned individuals. A full list of the organisations and individuals who have endorsed the statement can be viewed on the website of the Institute for Security Studies at www.issafrica.org

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