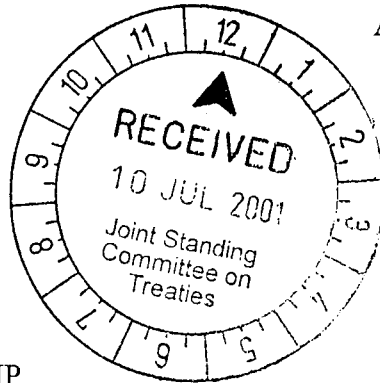


INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

AUSTRALIAN SECTION

This Correspondence to:
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The Hon Andrew Thomson MP
Chair
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission No. 219.

Dear Mr Thomson

RATIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT STATUTE

In October 2000 the Foreign Minister and the Attorney General jointly announced that Australia would introduce legislation to ratify the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the end of the year. Since then, however, the process for ratification has been held up by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties.

The Queensland branch of the International Commission of Jurists supports the early ratification of the Statute as there is a pressing need to provide a forum for those guilty of gross human rights violations to be dealt with according to law. The ICC would provide a permanent independent judicial body to deal with matters such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. This permanent body is preferable to the ad hoc tribunals established in the past by UN Security Council resolutions to deal with these issues such as with the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and is likely to enhance respect for human rights by providing a vehicle for dealing with their violation.

The ICJ (Qld) therefore urges the joint committee to deal with the matter expeditiously and will urge the government to ratify the Statute for the International Criminal Court without further delay.

Yours faithfully

The Hon Justice RG Atkinson
President of the Queensland Branch
International Commission of Jurists