

Committee on International Relations
U.S. House of Representatives
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For IMMEDIATE Release
Hyde Praises Decision by Bush Administration
to Unsign Treaty Establishing Int'l Criminal Court

(WASHINGTON) - U.S. Rep. Henry J. Hyde (R-IL), chairman of the House International Relations Committee, commented today on the announced decision by the Bush Administration to unsign the Treaty of Rome establishing the International Criminal Court:

"I commend the Bush Administration for restoring honesty to our dialogue with other nations about the International Criminal Court (ICC).

"Champions of international law should focus their fire on the Clinton Administration for the dubious way in which they signed the treaty establishing the ICC rather than the Bush Administration for correcting the mistaken impression left by their ill-considered action.

"International law in this regard is clear. Comment (d) to section 312 of the Restatement of the Law Third, Foreign Relations Law of the United States provides that 'signature [of a treaty] . . . is deemed to represent political approval and at least a moral obligation to seek ratification.' Accordingly, what is unprecedented is signing a treaty and then simultaneously declaring, as President Clinton did on December 31, 2000, that 'I will not, and do not, recommend that my successor submit the Treaty to the Senate for advice and consent until our fundamental concerns are satisfied.'

"It was clear then, and remains clear today, that our fundamental concerns about the ICC will never be satisfied. We simply cannot accept an international institution that claims jurisdiction over American citizens superior to that of our Constitution, and that threatens to prosecute and imprison Americans without benefit of the protections enshrined in our Bill of Rights.

"For these reasons, overwhelming majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate have voted within the last year for legislation that disassociates the United States entirely from the ICC. In this context, there can be no doubt that the United States will never ratify the treaty establishing the ICC.

"It would be dishonest for the United States to continue to represent to other nations that we are on track to become a party to that treaty when nothing could be further from the truth. The Bush Administration should be praised for setting the record straight."

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