

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE:** Friday, OCTOBER 24TH, 2003

**Contacts:**

Jeff Bleich, Munger, Tolles & Olson; President, Bar Association of San Francisco; (415) 512-4000  
Sandra Coliver, Executive Director, Center for Justice & Accountability; Chair, International Human Rights Committee, Bar Association of San Francisco; (415) 544-0444

## **San Francisco Bar Association Urges U.S. Government to Join International Criminal Court**

The Bar Association of San Francisco announced today that it had adopted a resolution urging the United States Government to accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The resolution also encouraged all members of the BASF to learn about the International Criminal Court, and to support the participation of the United States in the International Criminal Court, including its accession to the Rome Statute. The resolution was passed unanimously at the most recent meeting of the BASF's Board of Directors, and was announced on October 24<sup>th</sup> as part of the Bar's commemoration of United Nations Day.

The resolution was proposed by the BASF's International Human Rights Committee. At its October 8 meeting, the BASF Board heard presentations by leading thinkers on the implications of the United States joining the International Criminal Court. The speakers were Abraham D. Sofaer, the George P. Shultz Distinguished Scholar and Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, who served as legal adviser to the U.S. Department of State from 1985 to 1990, and **Allen S. Weiner**, the Warren Christopher Professor of the Practice of International Law and Diplomacy at Stanford Law School, who formerly served as an Attorney Adviser with the U.S. Department of State, Office of the Legal Adviser (1990-1996) and as Legal Counselor in the U.S. Embassy, The Hague (1996-2001).

Sandra Coliver, Chair of BASF's International Human Rights Committee, expressed gratitude for the Board's action. "We applaud the SF Bar Association for taking this action. Only two other U.S. bar associations have passed such a resolution - the ABA and the New York City Bar. With this action, the SF Bar demonstrates its leadership in the field of international justice. We hope that other associations will follow its lead." According to BASF President, Jeff Bleich, "it is fitting that the Bar has taken this important step in the City where the U.N. was formed. No true progress can be made in the cause of enforcing human rights until the U.S. joins the community of nations to develop a fair, just, effective and permanent international court."

As the first step in implementing its resolution, BASF is sponsoring a program entitled “The International Criminal Court: U.S. and Global Perspectives” on Tuesday, November 11, 2003, from noon to 1:30 p.m. A distinguished panel of legal scholars will discuss the formation and structure of the International Criminal Court (ICC), will debate the role of the U.S. in the ICC and the international perspectives of the ICC, and will provide information on how to become involved in the ICC's mission. The program will be held at BASF's offices, 465 California Street, 12th Floor. MCLE credit is available. To register, call BASF at (415) 982-1600.