

Unitarian Universalist Association
Support the International Criminal Court
2002 Action of Immediate Witness

Because Unitarian Universalists affirm and promote the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all and challenge the powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and love; and

Whereas the International Criminal Court, as the first permanent international institution to try individuals for the horrendous crimes of genocide, war crimes, and other crimes against humanity, will become a powerful new international instrument to pursue this goal and meet this challenge;

Whereas the International Criminal Court will begin its jurisdiction on July 1, 2002, hold the first session of the Assembly of States Parties in September 2002, and inaugurate its judges in March 2003, and is expected to begin hearings in its first cases in June 2003;

Whereas the United States, by its major role in the establishment and support of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, recognized the need to prosecute genocide, war crimes, and other crimes against humanity through international courts of law;

Whereas the Rome Statute contains numerous safeguards, including precedence to national courts and prosecutors, thus assuring that Americans who might be charged by the International Criminal Court can be tried under their own legal system;

Whereas the International Criminal Court will apply the rule of law to many types of terrorist acts when terrorism is of primary concern to the United States and the international community;

Whereas the United States, having signed the Rome Statute, which under international law signifies support for the basic concepts and principles of a treaty, on May 6, 2002, officially acted to nullify its signature and formally announced that it will not cooperate with or participate in any activities of the International Criminal Court; and

Whereas this action, which is unique in international relations, may result in the United States actively seeking to undermine the International Criminal Court and by this precedent weaken its commitments that support international law;

Be it resolved that we, the 2002 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, requests the President and Moderator of the Unitarian Universalist Association 1) to strongly urge the President of the United States to support and cooperate with the International Criminal Court, 2) to direct the Washington Office of the Unitarian Universalist Association to pursue the International Criminal Court as a priority activity in concert with other non-governmental organizations in Washington; and 3) to communicate this Action of Immediate Witness to the international Unitarian Universalist, Universalist, and Unitarian communities.

Be if further resolved that the General Assembly urge member congregations 1) to encourage their congregants to press their Representatives and Senators to eliminate legislation opposing the International Criminal Court and to support laws actively promoting it; 2) to call regularly on

the United States administration to work closely with the International Criminal Court; and 3) to cooperate locally with other like-minded persons in these efforts and efforts to educate and inform Americans about the importance of the International Criminal Court in establishing the rule of law.