



CONCEPT NOTE

In September 2012 the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice and UN Women will co-host a two day symposium assessing the progress and challenges to date in the prosecution of international crimes and advancing justice for conflict-affected communities. Considered through the lens of gender justice principles, the Symposium will bring together critical stakeholders to reflect upon the achievements in the field of international criminal justice as well as the challenges both in prosecuting such crimes and furthering international criminal law as a normative framework.

With the new Chief Prosecutor taking office at the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Rome Statute having been in force for 10 years, and the *ad hoc* tribunals and Special Court for Sierra Leone in the final stages of their mandates, the Symposium will provide a timely gathering of diverse constituencies whose views and support are critical to the success of the ICC as well as to the efficacy of the field of accountability and prevention of international crimes at large.

The Symposium proposes to reflect upon the progress and lessons learned at the *ad hoc* tribunals, the special courts as well as at the ICC regarding:

- Developments and challenges in the prosecution and jurisprudence for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide including accountability for the commission of gender-based crimes;
- The expansion of accessible justice for victims/survivors of international crimes and the location of these groups within the justice process;
- The legacy of this field to date from a gender justice perspective; and
- Practitioner-oriented recommendations and lessons learned for strengthening women's access to justice through the ICC.

The meeting will also serve as a forum to share new publications, research and unique advocacy tools including gender justice documentaries as well as UN Women's 2011 flagship report '*Progress of the World's Women: In pursuit of Justice*'. The report reviews the gains made in the last three decades in securing justice for women post-conflict and highlights the importance of justice in the rebuilding of communities and states.

Stakeholders

The stakeholders identified for this meeting include senior decision-makers and practitioners from the ICC and other international courts, including members of the Prosecution, Judiciary, and Registry, and independent entities including the ICC Trust Fund for Victims; States Parties; UN representatives; donors; academics; and women's rights and justice actors from communities affected by armed conflicts under ICC investigation. The Symposium will draw on the collective experience of participants in





exploring challenges in furthering gender-inclusive justice through the full length of the justice chain - analysis and investigations, prosecution, victim and witness support, and jurisprudence.

Objectives:

The primary objectives for this Symposium include:

- Building greater knowledge amongst key constituencies regarding the progress in the prosecution of international crimes including gender-based crimes.
- Building greater awareness and specificity regarding the identification and review of challenges in operationalising international justice including the emergence of specific challenges regarding the prosecution of gender-based crimes.
- Creating greater awareness amongst ICC practitioners about the range of expertise and constituencies relevant to and supportive of the Court's work.
- Developing greater awareness by all participants of the range and type of actors, communities and constituencies engaged with strengthening both the practice of international criminal accountability as well as advancing the normative framework of the Rome Statute.

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