



**Statement by Mrs Fatou Bensouda, Deputy Prosecutor**

**of the International Criminal Court**

*Conakry, Guinea – Friday, 19 February 2010*

**Fatou Bensouda: Guinea, the International Criminal Court and the entire international community will work together to deliver justice to the victims in Guinea.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has just completed its mission in Guinea. I would like to thank the Guinean authorities and especially Interim President Konaté and Prime Minister Doré for their cooperation. I would also like to assure the victims I have met and civil society of the importance I attach to my meetings with them. I was particularly struck by the bravery demonstrated by the women's associations. On 28 September 2009, in Conakry's stadium and the immediate area, the Guinean people were faced with horrendous crimes.

Men in uniform attacked civilians. They killed and wounded people. In broad daylight, they mistreated, raped, and subjected women to unprecedented acts of sexual violence.

In the wake of these events, via the Contact Group on Guinea which includes, amongst others, ECOWAS, the African Union, the UN, the African member countries of the Security Council as well as the Council's permanent members, the international community stated that those bearing the greatest responsibility for the crimes could not go unpunished. They should be tried by either the Guinean authorities or the International Criminal Court. There is no third way. On 14 October 2009, the Prosecutor

of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, announced that the situation in Guinea was under preliminary examination. He entered into contact with the States in the region and in particular the Head of State of Burkina Faso, President Blaise Compaoré, in order to explain the actions he was taking. It was agreed by all that justice had to take its course for such violence never to recur. Guinea is a State Party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which thus forms an integral component of the Guinean justice system. And these few days of work in Guinea have confirmed that the Guinean institutions and the Court could operate complementarily. Either the Guinean authorities themselves can prosecute those bearing the greatest responsibility or they can turn to the Court to do so. As Deputy Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, this visit has left me certain that crimes constituting crimes against humanity were committed. This has been a traumatic episode for all of Guinea, for all of Guinea's neighbours, for all of Africa and for the entire international community. Yet, Guinea can also become an example. If the Guineans try those bearing the greatest responsibility for these horrendous crimes, the interests of peace and reconciliation in Guinea will be served.