

**AU: Support Justice for Gravest Crimes** Human Rights Watch 27 June 2011 (...) Civil society groups from more than 25 countries in Africa issued a report today urging African member countries of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to show support for the court at the upcoming African Union (AU) summit meeting. The report, "[Observations and Recommendations on the ICC](#)," is endorsed by 125 African organizations and international groups with a presence in Africa.

The 17th AU summit will hold its assembly of heads of state from June 30 to July 1, 2011, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. Meetings of ministry-level officials in advance of the heads of state discussions began on June 23. (...)

(...) The civil society report is the latest initiative of an informal network of African and international organizations that have come together to promote principled support for the ICC. Each section was drafted by a different organization, and a number of other organizations provided editorial comments. Many of the groups involved are members of the global Coalition for the International Criminal Court.

The organizations said in the report that African ICC states parties should call for the AU to direct any outstanding concerns on its requests to suspend ICC cases to the Security Council. After the ICC issued warrants for President Omar al-Bashir of Sudan for international crimes committed in Darfur, the AU called for its members not to cooperate with his arrest because the council is unwilling to grant the case's delay. But the court has no authority to defer cases. The AU has also called for the council to delay ICC investigation of post-election violence in Kenya. (...)

(...) The report also raises concerns about the proposed expansion of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights to prosecute serious crimes in violation of international law. The African Court's authority is currently limited to cases concerning the responsibility of countries for human rights violations and to interpreting treaties. (...)

(...) The report addresses a May decision by the AU raising concern over two UN Security Council resolutions on Libya. It says that concerns over the use of force in Libya under resolution 1973 should not be conflated with the council's referral of Libya to the ICC under resolution 1970. (...)

(...) The report also calls for African ICC states parties to ensure the election at the end of 2011 of the most qualified candidate as the next ICC prosecutor through a fair and merit-based process. (...)

See full  
[article](#)

.

See the  
[NGO letter](#)

.