

March 22, 2010

PRESS STATEMENT

**BANGLADESH RATIFICATION OF THE ROME STATUTE IS
BEFITTING TRIBUTE TO VICTIMS OF 1971**

**BANGLADESH MUST DEPOSIT INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION
BEFORE 1 APRIL, 2010**

Odhikar congratulates the government for Ratifying the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) today. The Rome Statute was adopted by the international community on 17 July 1998 and Bangladesh signed it on 16 September 1999. The ICC acts on three major crimes genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity when States are incapable or unwilling to prosecute. The ICC is the first permanent international criminal court and considered as the most significant institution for justice, peace and security after the creation of United Nations. ICC is independent of UN.

The government's decision to ratify culminates the campaign against genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity waged by the people of Bangladesh since 1971. Today, Bangladesh has demonstrated its commitment to international justice and no impunity for international crimes.

As a State Party to the Rome Statute, Bangladesh would now join the Review Conference of the Rome Statute in May in Kampala, Uganda, where the crime of aggression will be defined and adopted. Bangladesh should ensure effective participation in defining this important crime.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh should formally deposit the "Instrument of Ratification" to UN Secretary General's office before 1 April 2010. To effectively cooperate with the ICC, Bangladesh also has to ratify the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court (APIC).



DR. C R Abrar
President



Adilur Rahman Khan
Secretary