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SAINT LUCIA BECOMES THE 113TH PARTY TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

On 18 August Saint Lucia ratified the Rome Statute at the UN Headquarters, recognizing the complementary jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court on its territory and over its nationals abroad when genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes are committed.

“By becoming a state party to the Rome Statute, St. Lucia is ensuring that those responsible for the most serious crimes are brought to justice, either before national courts or at the International Criminal Court in The Hague”, said Christopher Keith Hall, Senior Legal Adviser at Amnesty International.

St. Lucia ratifies the Rome Statute eleven years after signing it, on 27 August 1999, becoming the 113th state party and the 11th member state of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to become a party to this treaty.

“Although the ratification of the Rome Statute is a positive step, St. Lucia must now implement it in domestic law in a public and transparent process in which civil society should play a key role”, stated Christopher Keith Hall. “In addition, St. Lucia should promptly ratify the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court”.

All states that ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court commit themselves to cooperating fully with the Court and to investigating and prosecuting genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes before their national courts. The Court can only step in when the national authorities are unable or unwilling genuinely to do so. Without full cooperation, the Court will struggle to operate effectively. Without national investigations and prosecutions, the Court will be overwhelmed.

“Amnesty International hopes that this step in the right direction will soon be followed by the adherence of Saint Lucia to key human rights treaties, since its record so far has a number of fundamental gaps”, said Christopher Keith Hall.

Saint Lucia has not yet ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to war crimes and crimes against humanity, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, among other treaties of universal scope. St. Lucia also still has to ratify the American Convention on Human Rights and several other regional human rights treaties.

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