

18 May 2010

Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in Kampala, Uganda

There are important items on the agenda of the Kampala conference such as the crime of aggression. However, bringing the accused Omar al-Bashir to trial is currently the most significant step in consolidating the universal jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

It was thanks to pressure from the European Union that the Security Council of the United Nations referred the crimes in Darfur to the ICC. The arrest warrants issued by the ICC include one for the current Head of State of Sudan for crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The European Union must act in accordance with the assessment of its observers in the Sudanese elections, who concluded that the elections had not complied with international standards. Even if Omar al-Bashir had been elected legitimately, the European Union should still be demanding that he be brought to justice. The European Union cannot continue to give contradictory signals.

It is imperative that President Omar al-Bashir be handed over to the ICC. That will send a powerful signal to discourage other dictators from using violence against their peoples; failure in this case will have the opposite effect.