

Third Meeting of Defence Offices at the International Criminal Courts
22 & 23 October 2015
University of Geneva
(Geneva, Switzerland)

**FINAL STATEMENT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF DEFENCE OFFICES AT
THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURTS**

1. The Third International Meeting of Defence Offices ("Meeting") took place on 22 and 23 October 2015 at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. In attendance were the representatives of the Defence Offices and Sections, hereinafter referred to as the "Representatives", as well as lawyers and professional associations of lawyers, hereinafter the "Profession".
2. The Meeting was hosted by Mr. Jean-Marc Carnicé, President of the Geneva Bar, Ms. Christine Chappuis, Dean of the Faculty of law of the University of Geneva and Mr. Nicolas Michel, President of the Board of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.
3. The Meeting was chaired in turn by Mr. Iain Edwards, Member of the Bar of England and Wales and Defence Counsel before the STL, Ms. Colleen Rohan, President of ADC -ICTY, Mr. Salim Jreissati, Lawyer member of the Beirut Bar Association, former Minister and former member of the Constitutional Council of Lebanon, M. François Roux, Head of the Defence Office of the STL and M. George Jreij, President of the Beirut Bar.
4. The Meeting was closed by Mr. Nicolas Michel who made a presentation on the role of the United Nations in the creation of the international criminal tribunals.
5. The Meeting was honored to hear on that occasion M. George Jreij, President of the Beirut Bar, who made a solemn appeal to Lebanon to ratify the Rome Statute creating the International Criminal Court.
6. The Meeting resulted in the following final statement:
7. Following the debate that took place during the Second International Meeting in The Hague in December 2014, the Representatives noted with satisfaction the ongoing creation of an association of lawyers practicing before the International Criminal Court.
8. They reiterated that the interlocutor of this association within the Court must not be the Registry but a Defence Office as an independent body on an equal footing with the Office of the Prosecutor, following the example of the STL.
9. The Representatives have heard the concerns of the Profession about the need for practical and effective respect of adversarial proceedings and equality of arms before all jurisdictions whether national or international.
10. The independence of lawyers as a guarantee of a fair trial was also reaffirmed by the Profession, as was the importance of the defence of the Defence.

11. The Representatives and the Profession recalled the crucial role of the Defence as a pillar of criminal proceedings and therefore of justice.
12. Profession further expressed the need for special support when lawyers are in charge of representing accused against their will or without them.
13. The Profession renewed its concerns on the situation of persons acquitted before the International Criminal Tribunals and specifically requested the assistance of Representatives to solve this critical issue.
14. The Representatives expressed their support to the Profession to ensure the training of lawyers in new technologies and investigations.
15. Finally, according to the wishes expressed during the Second Meetings, it was decided to set up coordination between all institutions to follow up on the issues raised. The STL Defence Office was mandated to implement this coordination.
16. The Representatives and the Profession have expressed their gratitude to the Geneva Bar and the Faculty of Law at the University of Geneva for hosting the Third International Meeting particularly in this city of Geneva where the first Geneva Convention was signed on 22 August 1864.
17. Having been received by Mr Pierre Maudet, State Councilor responsible for Security and the Economy of the Canton of Geneva, in the Alabama Room where the first Geneva Convention was signed, the Representatives and the Profession reiterated that, strengthening the Defence and empowering it to exercise its mission, is firmly within the spirit of the Geneva Conventions.

This statement will be sent by the organizers to the competent authorities.

Geneva, the 23rd of October 2015