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**THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, THE UNITED STATES AND THE  
FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY**

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**ABSTRACT**

The International Criminal Court is the first permanent World Court with nearly universal jurisdiction to try individuals accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and possibly aggression. The Statute of Rome, establishing the Court, came into force on July 1, 2002. As the preamble to the Statute notes, the purpose of the Court is to end impunity for the perpetrators of atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity. The twentieth century has the infamy of being the bloodiest century in the history of mankind. This unenviable legacy does not show any loss of momentum today, which is grim testimony to the failure of the international community to create a mechanism to enforce international humanitarian law. The establishment of the Court is thus seen as a decisive step to prevent the commission of crimes that outrage the conscience of mankind. In spite of the skepticism being expressed by a few states about the effectiveness of the court, there can be no doubt about the imperativeness of regulating the conduct of war with the possibility of bringing violators of the laws of war or human rights to justice. It is the only viable alternative to the erstwhile victors' courts and selective ad hoc Tribunals.