

## **Federal Minister Steinmeier opens Peace Conference in Nuremberg:**

### **"Peace and reconciliation cannot be achieved by thinking in black and white"**

25 June 2007

Today (25 June) in Nuremberg, Federal Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier opened a three-day international conference on "Building a Future on Peace and Justice". In his opening speech, which he gave in the historical Courtroom 600 of the Nuremberg Palace of Justice, the venue for the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, Minister Steinmeier said:

"Peace, justice and development are interdependent. But we also know that there is no master plan showing us how to help societies damaged by conflict to find their own path. Peace and reconciliation cannot be achieved by thinking in black and white. But we must not let ourselves be discouraged by the complexity of the issue. That is why, under our G8 Presidency, we made cooperation on the rule of law a priority issue."

Steinmeier underlined in particular the importance of the International Criminal Court, saying: "This room started a development which reached its culmination five years ago when the International Criminal Court began its work. Since then 104 States have signed up to the Rome Statute, and the Criminal Court has become a pillar of hope in ensuring that crimes do not go unpunished."

Beforehand, those attending the conference heard a personal message of greeting from Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who called on the international community to devote more attention to the potential conflict between peace and justice.

From now until Wednesday, some 400 international experts and top-level officials will discuss their experiences of peace and reconciliation processes throughout the world. The relationship between punishment and forgiveness, as well as between the permitted scope of amnesties and the necessity to build up structures supporting the rule of law, play a key part here. The situation in countries such as Afghanistan, Uganda, Colombia and Iraq show just how topical this issue is.

The results of the conference are to be summarized and published as guidelines in a "Nuremberg Declaration".

The opening ceremony and conference will be hosted by Minister of State Günter Gloser. The conference will be attended by well-known leaders and personalities such as Martti Ahtisaari, the special envoy for Kosovo, Rangin Dadfar Spanta, the Afghan foreign minister, Sharif Al-Zubi, the Jordanian justice minister, Erkki Tuomioja, the former Finnish foreign minister, Luis Moreno Ocampo, prosecutor at the International Criminal Court, Sadako Ogata, the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Lakhdar Brahimi, the experienced UN conflict manager, and Sonia Picado, former judge at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, who is the personal representative of Costa Rican President Oscar Arias.