

period following the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials after World War II, but was put on the back burner throughout the entire Cold War period, and came alive again in the 1990s.

Following the six preparatory meetings between 1995 and 1998, the 116-article draft convention went to Rome on June 15 for a five-week plenipotentiary conference.

The ICHRDD was part of an international coalition of over 700 NGOs supporting the Court. We considered its establishment to be a critical tool and important means to combat impunity for human rights violations

Ad-hoc tribunals such as those established for Rwanda and Yugoslavia were good models, but this approach was temporary (short sighted), and unfairly selective. To take but one example, between 1975 and 1979, Pol Pot engineered the extermination of some two million Cambodians, and he died an old man before the international community found the resolve to put him on trial.

Our concern and the concern of most NGOs was that we would get a court which was not worth having. The U.S., France and others wanted the Security Council to have a veto over possible prosecutions - which in our view would have led to a continued system of uneven justice based on political considerations.

It was on this point and others, that Canada and like-minded countries took a strong principled stand.

The Canadian government, leading the like-minded coalition, insisted on the following points:

1. The Court must have inherent jurisdiction over genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity - and these must be properly defined.
2. The Court and the Prosecutor must be independent.
3. Acceptance of the principle of complementarity - the court will have jurisdiction only when a State cannot, or will not, act; but rejection of vetoes by the Security Council.
4. Jurisdiction to apply to wars within and between states.
5. Crimes against women and children- such as rape and child soldiers - to be included.

These goals were pursued by Canada through a new approach described as "human security" and "soft power". Speaking in support of the ICC at Harvard University on April 25, 1998, Lloyd Axworthy said:

A key element of this new thinking is what has been called "human security". Essentially, this is the idea that security goals should be primarily formulated and achieved in terms of human, rather than state, needs. Let me give a brief example of what this means in practical terms.

The campaign that led to the signing last December of the convention banning anti-personnel mines was based on a human security approach. We started from the premise that the threat to life and limb of millions of individuals should take precedence over military and national security interests.