

# Legal Alternatives to War (LAW not War)

A global campaign to enhance the universality  
and effectiveness of the International Court of Justice



*“From the smallest village to the global stage, the rule of law is all that stands between peace and stability and a brutal struggle for power and resources. I note the importance of accepting the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court and call on all Member States to do so without any reservations.”*

**Antonio Guterres**, UN Secretary-General. Remarks to the UN Security Council Thematic Debate on the Rule of Law amongst Nations, January 12, 2023

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## LAW not War campaign

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has demonstrated in numerous cases that it can help resolve international disputes through the application of due process and the law.

**LAW not WAR** is a global campaign to broaden the jurisdiction and enhance the use of the ICJ in order to more effectively implement the UN Charter prohibition of war and the obligation resolve international disputes peacefully rather than through recourse to the threat or use of force.

## Like-minded States' Declaration

LAW not War is working in cooperation with a group of 10 like-minded governments (Japan, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain and Switzerland).

The group has released a *Declaration on promoting the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice* focusing on the measures listed in the LAW not War campaign objectives (below).

# Campaign objectives

## Policy goals

- **Increase the number of States accepting the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ.**  
74 countries currently accept ICJ jurisdiction for any legal dispute. The goal is to achieve universal acceptance of jurisdiction by 2045, the 100th anniversary of the United Nations.
- **Encourage more frequent use of the ICJ as a dispute resolution mechanism provided in international treaties;**
- **Appeal to States to make more frequent use of ICJ jurisdiction by mutual agreement;**
- **Support UN bodies to more frequently and effectively request ICJ Advisory Opinions on critical issues;**
- **Encourage States to adopt constitutional amendments or legislative measures to affirm the UN Charter prohibition of war and the obligation to resolve international disputes peacefully including through recourse to the ICJ.**

## Education about the ICJ and related tribunals

A lack of awareness of the role and recognition of the effectiveness of international courts and tribunals including the ICJ hinders the ability to for them to fulfill their full potential.

The ICJ has played a critical role in preventing disputes from escalating into conflict and offered coherent and consistent guidance on the rule of law. It provides a non-politicized mechanism to resolve conflict and ensure accountability. The Court would accomplish these vital functions even more effectively if better utilized.

LAW not War includes a strong focus on educating these constituencies about the value and impact of international tribunals and the ICJ in particular.

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### Further information at:

LAW not War (Legal Alternatives to War): Towards universal jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

[www.unfoldzero.org/law-not-war](http://www.unfoldzero.org/law-not-war)

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### Co-sponsoring organizations

