



## HONORABLE MENTION | DOCUMENTARIES

### *The Reckoning: The Battle for the International Criminal Court*

Skylight Pictures

New York, New York

Pamela Yates, *Director* Peter Kinoy, *Executive Editor* Paco De Onis, *Producer*

## COMMITTEE COMMENTARY

This ambitious 95-minute documentary is an admiring portrait of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC came into existence just eight years ago, established by an international treaty that resulted from the landmark Rome Conference held in 1998. There are currently 111 nation-state members of the Court—but not the United States, Russia, or China. At the center of the story in *The Reckoning* is Luis Moreno Ocampo, an Argentine lawyer who is the first and only prosecutor of the ICC. The filmmakers gained unprecedented access to Moreno and his colleagues at their offices in The Hague and as they pursued investigations in Uganda, Congo, and Colombia. *The Reckoning* showcases the efforts of ICC lawyers to bring justice to victims of genocide and crimes against humanity in states unable or unwilling to prosecute. As one prosecutor comments, however, their enterprise is a “justice start up,” requiring new rules and practices to be forged. They see their work as following in the tradition of the post World War II Nuremberg Tribunals. A powerful moment in the documentary comes when historical footage of a young Nuremberg prosecutor, Benjamin Ferencz, dissolves into an interview with the present-day octogenarian and longtime advocate for an international criminal court, now seeing his dream trying to become a 21st century reality. These realities include the fact that the ICC has no police force and must rely on member states to bring the accused to justice. *The Reckoning* also explores why the United States has yet to ratify the Rome Statute and join the ICC as a member state. This documentary is to be commended for fostering public awareness of this important new international legal institution in our global era.



Pamela Yates



Peter Kinoy



Paco de Onis

### INTERVIEW with Pamela Yates, Peter Kinoy, and Paco de Onis

*The Reckoning* is a Skylight Pictures film. Pamela Yates directed the documentary, with Peter Kinoy serving as editor and Paco de Onis as producer. They responded as a group to this interview.

#### Where did the initial idea for *The Reckoning* come from?

In May 2002 we were traveling through the high Andes with the Peruvian Truth & Reconciliation Commission. During a casual conversation we asked one of the TRC members what he had done before, and he told us that he had worked with the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, encouraging countries to ratify the Rome Statute and become members of the ICC. The Rome Statute stipulated that when 60 countries had ratified the treaty, the International Criminal Court would be created. That happened not too long after our conversation.

#### What resources were required to develop your documentary?

We raised \$1.3 million to make the film. We went on location with a team that consisted of the director, producer, director of photography, sound recordist, our local in-country producer, and driver. It took us three years to film *The Reckoning* on four continents and more than a year to edit it with a team of two editors.

#### How do you think your documentary treats or offers insights or perspectives on legal issues and legal institutions?

We think that *The Reckoning* offers great insights into the thorny challenges of taking an idea like the creation of a permanent and independent International Criminal Court and making it a functioning institution in the real world of global power politics and diplomacy.

#### How does *The Reckoning* foster public understanding?

We've found that the overwhelming majority of people who see the film, even legally sophisticated viewers, come away with a much clearer picture of how the ICC operates and the formidable challenges that it faces.

Go to [www.skylightpictures.com](http://www.skylightpictures.com) to purchase a DVD of *The Reckoning* for \$29.95 plus \$10 s/h or to learn more about the film. For “Teaching *The Reckoning*” resources, go to <http://www.facinghistory.org/resources/publications/teaching-reckoning>