

Thirteenth Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court

General debate - Statement of the Netherlands

Mr. President,

I welcome this opportunity to deliver a statement on behalf of the Netherlands, both as a committed State Party to the Rome Statute, as well as the host State of the Court. My delegation would also like to align itself with the statement made earlier by the distinguished representative of Italy on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Monsieur le Président,

Les Pays-Bas se félicitent de votre désignation au poste de président de l'Assemblée des États Parties. Nous espérons que votre présidence donnera un nouvel élan au développement de la Cour, plus précisément dans les domaines de l'universalité, de la complémentarité et de la coopération. Vous pouvez compter sur notre entier soutien pour l'accomplissement de votre mandat.

The Netherlands welcomes the election of two new judges and we hope that the Secretariat will guide us through the election of the four remaining judges. To a large extent, the success of the Court depends both on the quality and the commitment of the Court's staff and its elected officials. The judicial activities of the Court have continuously expanded up to the point where 21 cases in 9 situations have been brought for the Court. We look specifically towards the judges for rendering justice in accordance with the principles of independence, impartiality and effectiveness with a view to put an end to impunity for perpetrators of the most serious and heinous crimes.

Mr. President,

Promoting the universal ratification and the effective implementation of the Rome Statute remains a priority for the Netherlands. The number of States Parties (122) reflects the importance of the Court as the central permanent criminal justice body on the international stage. We look forward to new states joining the community of States Parties and call upon the States Parties, the Court and NGO's to continue their efforts towards new ratifications and the ultimate objective of universality. The Netherlands will assist in reaching this goal. We welcome the seven new ratifications of the Kampala amendments that came this year. The Netherlands is in the final stage of the process of ratification and is looking forward to joining the States Parties having already ratified the Kampala amendments in 2015.

Mr. President,

We welcome the inclusion of a special session in this Assembly on the very important topic of cooperation. It is essential that all States Parties fully cooperate with the Court. The success of the Court in combatting the culture of impunity rests

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entirely on State cooperation in the enforcement of its orders and decisions. In this respect, the number of outstanding arrest warrants is of particular concern to the Netherlands. But the need for strengthened cooperation is also apparent in numerous other situations. The Netherlands together with Norway invites all interested delegations to a side event on cooperation in witness protection during today's lunch break.

As a State Party we are not only committed to cooperate with the Court. We are also convinced of the necessity for States Parties to properly implement the Rome Statute and pro-actively practice the principle of complementarity. In this context, we think it is of utmost importance to strengthen the international framework for legal assistance and extradition between States in cases of international crimes, in order to increase the efficiency in national criminal proceedings and in this way fulfil the principle of complementarity to its fullest extent. I would like to refer in this regard to the joint initiative for a multilateral treaty in this area and welcome you all to the side event that will take place on Thursday 11 December.

I also wish to emphasize the need to address remedies for victims of international crimes and welcome the continued efforts of the Trust Fund for Victims in this regard.

Mr. President,

We appreciate the work carried out by the Committee on Budget and Finance and the way in which the Court has worked together with the States Parties during the budget negotiations this year. Fortunately we have been able to conclude the discussions on the 2015 budget before the start of the ASP. We would like to thank Ambassador Drumml the facilitator for budget for his excellent work. We stress the importance of improving the budget process further and the need to start next year's negotiations as early as possible.

Finally, speaking on behalf of the Netherlands in its capacity as the host State, we are extremely pleased that the construction of the permanent premises is advancing on time and successfully. We are looking forward to having the Court pursue its work at its permanent home which will undoubtedly be recognized by the next generations as an important symbol of the fight against impunity.

Mr. President,

The Netherlands looks forward to joining all States Parties, officials of the Court and members of the NGO community in a constructive dialogue, with a view to achieve a successful outcome on all issues before us.

Thank you.