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Statement by H.E. Yeghishe Kirakosyan, Representative of the Republic of Armenia on the International Legal Issues

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank the President of the Assembly of State Parties, Her Excellency Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi for her leadership, and to wish the distinguished Madam President much success in the future. Armenia also congratulates the newly elected President of the Assembly Her Excellency Päivi Kaukoranta, the members of the Bureau, and the candidates who have been elected as judges of the Court.

As an incoming member, Armenia would like to express appreciation for all the welcoming messages that have been conveyed by the members of the Assembly throughout this debate. By acceding to the Rome Statute Armenia will become the 124th State Party starting from February 2024 and the 19th member state in the Eastern European group. Armenia has also made a declaration under Article XIII on recognizing the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court retroactively from 10th of May 2021.

Armenia's decision to ratify the Rome Statute emphasizes our strong adherence to the international law and signifies our unequivocal commitment to upholding justice, fighting impunity and ensuring accountability, in the face of persistent challenges. As has demonstrated so many times before - including in our most recent history and in our own very region - more often than not, it is the lack of accountability that breeds more violations and grave crimes. It is therefore imperative that we collectively reemphasize the importance of upholding the rule of law, specifically, in times of conflict and crisis, to punish and prevent the most egregious violations that shake the very foundations of international law and humanity.

Historically, and in most recent history, having experienced the devastating consequences of violence and conflicts, Armenia very well understands the grave impact of conflicts on communities and societies. By becoming a party to the Rome Statute, we express our commitment to effective international action to ensure that accountability for the gravest crimes is not only

sought but also achieved, that victims receive justice and redress and that the perpetrators are held accountable. We consider that this can be only achieved through the Court's universalization.

Armenia has already started to conduct the necessary steps, internally, to implement the commitments stemming from the Rome Statute, including the relevant legislative efforts.

As ever, Armenia remains strongly committed to the effective prevention and punishment of acts of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Addressing and combatting impunity for such crimes is an essential duty of every Member State.

I would like to conclude by reiterating Armenia's steadfast determination to support efforts to effectively address and prevent new and recurrent atrocities, and to ensure tangible progress in this regard.

I thank you.