

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Check against delivery

STATEMENT

by H.E. Mr. Ranko VILOVIĆ

Permanent Representative

at

**THE TENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

New York, 12 – 21 December 2011

Mr. Vice-President,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Intelmann, for taking over the presidency of the Assembly of the State Parties. At the same time let me thank former President, Ambassador Christian Wenaweser for his able leadership and dedicated work in the last three years.

Furthermore I would like to congratulate newly elected prosecutor Ms. Fatou B. Bensouda. Having been able to closely follow her work up to date, we express full confidence in her ability to successfully master many challenging tasks in front of her. We would also like to thank Mr. Moreno Ocampo for his persistent efforts to bring to justice high level state officials accused for serious crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide.

On behalf of the Republic of Croatia, I would like to align ourselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Poland, on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Vice-President,

Allow me to congratulate six additional States for becoming new State Parties since the last Assembly and to welcome the fact that the goals pursued by the Court and the values it promotes, continue to advance steadily towards universal acceptance. I would also like to use this opportunity to encourage all other states to become State Parties to the Rome Statute as soon as possible.

The objective of the ICC – to punish and prevent the most serious crimes of concern to the international community – is the long- attended goal and Croatia remains committed to supporting the ICC, its integrity, independence and efficient functioning.

Mr. Vice-President,

The Review Conference was a resounding success. The Kampala Declaration reflects the commitment of the international community to the Rome Statute and to its full implementation. The Review Conference also witnessed the historic adoption of the resolution on the Crime of Aggression. The adoption of the aggression amendments, together with the associated elements and understandings, is a turning point in development of international criminal law. Referring to the definition of the Crime of aggression, I have a pleasure to inform you that Croatia accepted the definition as stipulated in the Article 8*bis* of the Rome Statute. A new definition of the Crime of aggression as a crime against humanity and human dignity is implemented in the Article 89 of a new Criminal Code of the Republic of Croatia which will enter into force on 1st January 2013.

In addition, and pursuant to the obligations undertaken on the Review Conference in Uganda, the Republic of Croatia pledged to organize seminar for public administration, judges and prosecutors in charge for cooperation with International Criminal Court. In

that context, I am very pleased to inform that on 30 June 2011, the Office for the Cooperation with the International Criminal Courts of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration organized a Round table on theme "The results of the first Review Conference of the International Criminal Court - Croatian confirmation of the commitment to cooperation with the ICC and the fight against impunity". The aim of the discussion was to underline the strong commitment of the Republic of Croatia to the Rome Statute and achievement of its universality through the promotion of the first goal of the newly emerging system of international criminal justice: putting an end to impunity for the worst crimes and thus contributing to postconflict peacebuilding, security and rule of law.

Mr. Vice-President,

Five days ago Croatia signed the Accession Treaty with the EU. We are glad that during the transitional period between the signing of the Accession Treaty and entry into full membership of the EU, representatives of Croatia will participate in the working bodies of the EU Council and professional bodies chaired by the European Commission as an active observer and, accordingly, in the activities of the Working Party on Public International Law - International Criminal Court.

Croatia looks forward to the consequent presentations by the heads of the organs of the Court and Chairs of different Committees in the affirmation of the One-Court principle and stands ready to fully engage in ensuing deliberations. Furthermore, let me stress that Croatia pays particular attention to victims' swift and efficient access to justice, as well as their participation, and, in that context, highly appreciates the valuable work of the Trust Fund for Victims aimed at easing their suffering and assuring to them appropriate reparations.

Finally, Mr. Vice-President, let me conclude by saying that Croatia strongly supports the efforts aimed at improving transparency and efficiency of the ICC budget in order to enable the Court to promptly and adequately respond to constantly shifting environment. Croatia finds particularly important further work towards balanced and coherent relationship between strategic planning and budgetary processes. Croatia looks forward to thorough discussions on this important issue, including detailed review of the Committee on Budget and Finance Report, and hopes that it will result in well-balanced and effective budget, which will enable the Court to successfully fulfil its many important tasks and responsibilities. Finally, I wish the Assembly a lot of success in its work.

Thank you, Madam President.