



STATEMENT

BY

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of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

at the

General Debate of the Tenth Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the

Rome Statute of the

International Criminal Court

**United Nations Headquarters
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Madame President

Trinidad and Tobago welcomes this opportunity to participate in yet another general debate of the Assembly of States Parties (“the ASP”) to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). For us, the general debate is an ideal vehicle for States Parties to demonstrate their political commitment to advance the work of the Court, as well as to honour their obligations under the Rome Statute.

We are very pleased that the Assembly of States Parties continues to fully implement the principles and objectives of the Rome Statute in an objective, transparent and democratic manner. This was observed with the election of the new President of the Assembly of States Parties, as well as the election by acclamation of the new Prosecutor of the ICC. We wish to assure President Intelmann and Prosecutor elect Bensouda of the full support of Trinidad and Tobago during your respective terms of office.

When the Court was established it became evident that its success would be dependent on several factors, including, a fearless and independent Prosecutor. Trinidad and Tobago is satisfied that Mr. Louis Moreno Ocampo demonstrated these attributes in the conduct of his work during his almost nine years in office. We wish Mr. Ocampo all the best in his future endeavours. At the same time, it is our expectation that the international community would be able to benefit from the knowledge and breadth of experience of this most able lawyer in the future. Mr. Ocampo, we applaud you; we salute you; and we thank you.

Madame President

Trinidad and Tobago also wishes to place on record its appreciation to former President of the Assembly of States Parties, Ambassador Christian Wenawesar of Liechtenstein for his dedication and hard work in furthering the objectives of the Rome Statute during his tenure in office. We also applaud the role of his government in facilitating the inter-sessional meetings of the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression which was very instrumental in shaping the adoption of the definition of this crime at the Kampala Review Conference. His contribution to the work of the Court is also testimony to the significant role played by small states in the evolution of the ICC.

At the Review Conference as well, Trinidad and Tobago was among those States Parties which pledged to pursue certain objectives to assist in the universality and full

implementation of the Rome Statute. In keeping with these undertakings, in May of this year, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago together with the Commonwealth Secretariat, and with the support of the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties, successfully hosted a Regional Seminar on the Rome Statute for Member States of the Caribbean Community ("CARICOM").

The Seminar which witnessed the participation of the Presidents of the ICC and the ASP as well as other high-ranking officials, focused on our pledges made at Kampala:

- to promote the universality of the Rome Statute among Member States of CARICOM which are not States Parties to the Statute
- to make available to other States within the region our national legislation implementing the provisions of the Statute, which can be used as model legislation; and
- to advocate for the ratification of the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court.

Trinidad and Tobago will continue to pursue the goal of universal ratification of the Rome Statute and will also maintain its efforts aimed at securing the full and effective implementation of the Statute in our region. Additionally, we will seek to implement the recommendations contained in the outcome document of the seminar which include exploring the possibility of CARICOM concluding a Framework Cooperation Arrangement with the ICC similar to one that was concluded with the OAS. We recognize the value of cooperation between the ICC and regional organizations to the promotion of peace, security and an end to impunity.

Madame President

While the ICC is not without its detractors, Trinidad and Tobago wishes to commend the Court on the great strides that it has made in discharging its mandate to ensure that the perpetrators of the most heinous crimes known to humanity are brought to justice. We must, however, reiterate previously expressed concerns that progress in certain matters has been stymied due to the failure by a few States Parties and other entities to cooperate with the Court in certain areas such as the execution of arrest warrants and the surrender of accused persons to the institution. Cooperation remains one of the pillars upon which this great tribunal rests. The persistent refusal to cooperate with the ICC constitutes a breach of legally binding obligations and serves to undermine the effectiveness of the Court. We therefore urge all the relevant parties to cooperate with the Court to ensure that justice is served to the individuals who are

accused of committing heinous crimes which have destroyed and devastated the lives of thousands of victims, including women and children.

Although international support for the Statute continues to increase, as is evident by the increase in number of States Parties from different regions of the globe, some critics continue to allege that Court's focus is too centred on the African continent. Trinidad and Tobago submits that evidence before us does not support such assertions, especially at a time when the ICC has extended its investigatory and monitoring mechanisms to Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe.

Madame President

On Monday this Assembly elected the Honourable Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona to serve as a judge of the Court for a nine-year term. We wish to thank the Assembly for its clear recognition that this distinguished jurist fully meets the criteria, specified in Article 36 of the Statute for election. This Assembly and the Court should be assured that Justice Carmona will apply the commendable breadth of knowledge and experience he has gained over almost three decades in the field of criminal law including international criminal law to upholding the ideals of the Court as enshrined in the Statute. We also congratulate the other judges who were elected over the past few days.

In closing, Trinidad and Tobago wishes to underscore that as a responsible State Party and as a member of the Bureau of the Assembly, we will remain steadfast in our support for the ICC in its quest to adhere to the principles enshrined in the Rome Statute laid down by the founding fathers of the Court.

I thank you.