

Statement by H.E. Gyula Sümeghy

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Embassy of Hungary to the Kingdom of the Netherlands

at the general debate of the 11th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court

“Tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute: the challenges ahead”

Madame President,

Members of the Assembly,

Distinguished Delegates,

It is a great honour for me to address the Assembly of States Parties today on behalf of the Government of Hungary on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute.

First of all my delegation would like to commend the Bureau, the Secretariat and the President of the Assembly, the facilitators, the Committee on Budget and Finance, as well as the representatives of the Court for their devoted work in the preparation of the 11th session of the Assembly. Let me also congratulate Judge Song for his re-election as President of the Court and Ms Fatou Bensouda as the new Prosecutor.

Madame President,

The “road to Rome” was a long and often contentious one, but ten years ago the Rome Statute entered into force with 60 ratifications, Hungary being among them, and by now the number of the States Parties has grown to 121. This shows the increasing support and consensus of the international community regarding the fight against impunity. Hungary - emphasizing its devotion towards the achievements of these 10 years - dedicated a conference to this important anniversary in July 2012 thereby raising the national awareness about the ICC.

Distinguished Delegates,

After ten years we can say that this young institution has already entered into the consolidation phase of its activities. The ICC conducts investigations in seven different countries and has already opened 15 cases. Moreover, two cases have been referred to the Court by the Security Council. The fact that Security Council resolution 1970 referring the situation in Libya to the ICC was adopted unanimously was a significant development.

Hungary also welcomes the first judgement rendered in the Thomas Lubanga case in March 2012. In view of the above - a decade after the entry into force of the Rome Statute - we can safely say that the ICC has become an indispensable instrument for combating impunity, promoting national reconciliation, strengthening international peace and security as well as the rule of law.

To fulfil its mission, cooperation is one of the most important issues for the effective functioning of the Court. Recent examples of serious non-cooperation pose a great threat to the effectiveness of its proceedings and ultimately to international justice. Of particular concern is the number of outstanding arrest warrants, therefore, we strongly urge all States Parties to fulfil their cooperation obligations under the Rome Statute.

With the number of cases rapidly increasing, the major challenge is to ensure the effective functioning of the Court by providing sufficient funding while taking into account the budgetary constraints of States Parties. We believe that adequate resources are fundamental to the transparent and effective functioning, but under the present economic circumstances, we encourage the Court to continue its efforts to identify those key areas where savings can be made and also to improve its effectiveness.

The ICC can certainly be commended for its considerable efforts to give a voice to the victims of serious human rights abuses. Its general approach towards victims and the Trust Fund are undoubtedly a great improvement. The witnesses' rights, needs and concerns have to be properly addressed at all stages of ICC proceedings. To emphasize the importance of these issues and to facilitate the realization of the Court's goals, the Government of Hungary would like to announce that it has decided to make a voluntary contribution of 10.000 euros to the Trust Fund for Victims for the year of 2012.

In conclusion I would like to reiterate our deep commitment to the International Criminal Court and to the fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes.

I thank you for your attention.