



S L O V A K I A

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STATEMENT

by

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to the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

**11th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court**

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Madam President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to be here today and to deliver a statement on behalf of the Slovak Republic. I would like to use this opportunity to appreciate, Madam President, your strong personal commitment and dedication while carrying out your mandate. I wish you all the success in your mission and let me re-assure you of strong support of my country. At the same time I recall an invaluable work of both the Hague and New York working groups. The outcomes of their endeavours have been presented to this Assembly. It is my pleasure to thank all facilitators and coordinators for their efforts allowing the Assembly of States Parties to work smoothly.

Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to align myself with the statement presented earlier by distinguished deputy minister of Cyprus on behalf of the European Union.

The year 2012 is a milestone in the Court's life for many reasons. Judge Song was re-elected President of the Court and Ms. Bensouda was sworn in as the Court's Prosecutor. We are also very well aware of the fact that the Court rendered its first verdict in Thomas Lubanga Dyilo case. Ten years after the entry into force of the Rome Statute the International Criminal Court has achieved the status of a strong and widely accepted component of international criminal justice based on principles of legality and accountability. Slovakia re-affirms its commitment to the mission and mandate of the Court dedicated to ending impunity of perpetrators of the most serious and the most heinous crimes under international law.

The total number of States Parties to the Rome Statute has reached 121 earlier this year which clearly shows that the International Criminal Court has gained wide recognition and legitimacy. On the other side, we need to work further on increasing the number of States Parties while convincing other key state actors to join the community of States accepting the Court's jurisdiction. We fully support activities aiming at universality of the Rome Statute.

There are many challenges the Court has to deal with on daily basis. The enforcement of arrest warrants, protection of witnesses and obstacles in gathering the evidence are only some of them. While fully respecting the Court's independence and impartiality in conducting its judicial functions it is crucial that States Parties are ready to provide the Court with full support and effective cooperation. The problem of non-cooperation has become one of the most pressing issues before the Court. This is exactly the area the States Parties should assist the Court in identifying the most appropriate measures to address this urgent matter. Furthermore, we are of the view that the UN Security Council should support the referrals of situations to the Court with an effective follow-up enforcement mechanism enabling the Court to fulfil its mandate effectively. The Assembly provides a unique forum for representatives of States to share their views with the Court's officials how to make the Court more effective tool of international criminal justice.

Madam President,

It is necessary to reiterate the role of the Court as a court of last resort intervening in absence of genuine action by national authorities. The complementarity principle is a cornerstone of the system built on Rome Statute. We take with great appreciation that the issue of complementarity is an important agenda item in the program of this Assembly and we look forward to fruitful discussions later in course of this session. We welcome all the efforts of the ASP Secretariat aiming at facilitating the contacts between donor States, organizations, civil society on one hand and recipient States on the other hand, with a view to strengthen and improve national criminal justice capacities.

Madam President,

In the upcoming days this Assembly will discuss great variety of topics directly affecting the future work of the Court. The budget proposal for 2013, discussions on cooperation and complementarity, follow-up of the Review Conference just to mention a few of them. One may expect long exchange of opposing views, tough negotiations, even discord. However, we all have to have in mind our common goal. More effective and more efficient Court.

The budgetary framework is necessary precondition for fulfilling the mandate of any international organization. We welcome progress already done in preparatory phase of the

budget discussions. Slovakia is ready to support efforts towards improving the judicial functions of the Court. In this regard, we expect that the approved annual budget will reflect the level of on-going as well as reasonably anticipated judicial activities. It is necessary for us and for the credibility of the Court that all financial resources will be used in a transparent way. We hope that while discussing the future expenses of the Court the recommendations of the Committee on Budget and Finance will be seriously taken into account.

Madam President,

Slovakia took a decision to make a one-time payment as its contribution towards the expenses for the permanent premises of the Court. My country has met its obligation at the beginning of November by transferring its share to the Court's account. Having said that, I want to emphasize that now we will follow even more scrupulously how efficiently the financial means provided to the Court by States Parties are being utilized.

Madam President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ten years after the entry into force of the Rome Statute probably only a few have doubts that the International Criminal Court has become fully fledged international institution in good faith carrying out its judicial mandate.

In conclusion, allow me to say that we firmly believe that the Court will be further shaped with an aim to build a modern efficient and effective tool of international criminal justice.

Thank you.