



**Statement by  
H.E. Dr Božo Cerar, State Secretary,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia  
ICC - ASP, 11th session**

Madam President,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad that we have gathered today in such large numbers to mark the Court's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Decades ago, this was only a dream of a few dedicated persons who were rigorously pushing for the establishment of the first ever permanent international criminal court. We should bear in mind that the adoption of the ICC Rome Statute was a truly historic event and a milestone in the humanisation of international relations. It promotes and maintains global peace and security. I am pleased to inform you that the Slovenian Foreign Ministry marked this occasion by organising a round table in cooperation with civil society and prominent scholars and with a key-note address by the ICC Prosecutor, Ms Bensouda. It is of paramount importance to disseminate information on the Court's important work to all levels of the public.

Madam President,

let me congratulate the newly elected members of the Advisory Committee on Nominations of Judges and members of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims. The effective performance of these functions is essential for the Court's work, and I am convinced that with your expertise, we will manage them in the best possible way. At the same time, let me thank you, Madam President, the President of the Court, the Prosecutor, the Registrar and all the Court's staff, as well as the Working Groups and facilitators, who work tirelessly for the benefit of this institution. Let me also commend the dedicated work of the Coalition of the International Criminal Court and all other civil society organisations which make a very important contribution to the ICC and international criminal justice in general.

Madam President,

we are glad to note that on the occasion of its anniversary, the Court rendered its first judgment and took the historic decision on reparations for victims. This shows that the Court has become an efficient mechanism for bringing justice to the victims of serious crimes. Some claim that we had to wait too long for this decision. We should be aware of the complexity of judicial decisions on core international crimes. The most important matter is that the Court is recognised as an effective and efficient judicial institution rendering just and impartial judgments. Only such decisions will help us end impunity for mass atrocities. The Slovenian Government will continue to offer the ICC its full support.

As you may know, Slovenia has always been a staunch supporter of the ICC. So far, the international community has achieved commendable progress, but its work is far from over. We must continue our

efforts to further strengthen the system of international criminal justice and fully assess the lessons learned and study best practices. In our view, the Kampala Review Conference in 2010 was a huge success. The States Parties have reiterated their commitment to the objectives and purposes of the Court and achieved the historic consensual adoption of the amendment on the Crime of Aggression. I am happy to note that Slovenia is in the process of ratifying both Kampala amendments. It is our sincere hope that the amendments will enter into force as soon as possible. At the same time, I can announce that Slovenia has already incorporated both amendments into its internal legislation.

An important issue on our agenda is complementarity. We should bear in mind that States have a primary responsibility to prosecute international crimes. We fully support the ongoing discussion on this important issue. Let me also say that Slovenia, together with the Netherlands and Belgium, initiated a discussion on the possibility of adopting a multilateral instrument on mutual legal assistance and extradition, with a view to increasing the efficiency of investigations and prosecutions of core crimes within domestic jurisdictions.

Madam President,

we are convinced that cooperation with the Court is essential to its smooth functioning and visibility. We therefore urge all states to cooperate fully with the Court. Constant dialogue is also needed to bridge potential differences of opinion on the Court's work. We are glad to note that the Group of Friends was also established in Geneva. We hope that a liaison office will be established in Addis Ababa in order to strengthen cooperation between the Court and the African Union. Slovenia also hopes that the number of ICC supporters will grow in the coming years and that the ICC will finally achieve universality.

We are currently facing the worst financial and economic crisis since the great depression of the 1930s, which is also reflected in the Court's budget negotiations. We must take difficult decisions on how to fulfil past commitments to render justice to victims on a broad scale with the scarce resources that we have at our disposal. I am convinced that will we find a common understanding of the right balance between our commitment to fight impunity and management of the resources available.

Madam President,

Slovenia is closely following crimes allegedly committed in Syria and takes the view that the situation should be investigated by the ICC. In this respect, Slovenia supports the initiatives to call on the Security Council to use its powers to refer the situation to the ICC.

Finally, let me reiterate that Slovenia is strongly committed to the prevention of impunity for grave crimes of international concern and to the rule of law. The ICC undoubtedly plays a central role in the endeavours of the international community to achieve this goal.

Let me also take this opportunity to repeat at this Forum the initiative of the Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Janša proposed at this year's UN General Assembly General Debate entitled 'A World Free from Genocide'. Member States, regional and sub-regional organisations and the UN system should set up an intergovernmental forum of like-minded countries that would provide the 'Responsibility to Protect' concept with new tools to enforce prevention and develop a mechanism for a more rapid and effective response to acts of genocide and other mass atrocities. Slovenia is ready to start a dialogue to this end.

Thank you.