

Annex III

Statement of the President of the Assembly*

This is the last session of the Assembly within the term of Ms. Silvana Arbia, the Registrar of the Court whose term is coming to an end early next year. Ms. Arbia has served the Court as its second-ever Registrar since her election in February 2008. In that function, she has had close contact with States, as the Registry, under her direction, exercises many functions that are very much on the minds of States Parties. The preparation of the annual budget and the facilitation of victims' participation are just two of these functions.

It is no secret that Ms. Arbia has had a long involvement with the International Criminal Court. She was involved in the drafting of the Rome Statute as a member of the Italian delegation to the Rome Conference. On behalf of States Parties, I thank Ms. Arbia for her service to the Court and wish her all the best in the future.

The eleventh session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute has come to an end. It has been a nice culmination to a year of activities all over the world to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the entry-into-force of the Rome Statute. The fact that we are closing this session ahead of schedule shows that we have worked together in a good and very constructive spirit.

We have been able to conduct the general debate. We have also addressed two substantive agenda items, cooperation and complementarity.

Under cooperation we focused on the execution of warrants of arrest and seizure of assets. These are two crucial forms of cooperation. I hope that experiences shared by panellists were appreciated by all participants.

The Assembly has greatly benefitted from the participation of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Ms. Helen Clark, whose keynote address was a fitting start to the first plenary discussion on complementarity. I was heartened to see many States Parties, international organizations and NGOs participate in this debate. Interaction with and contribution from development actors will remain vital in our strive for complementarity.

In terms of elections, we have elected Mr. James Stewart to serve for the next nine years as Deputy Prosecutor. We wish Mr. Stewart all the best in this challenging job and hope that his way to the team of the Office of the Prosecutor will be quick and smooth.

We have also elected five members of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims and nine members of the Advisory Committee of Nominations.

We have been able to agree on the budget of the Court for 2013 in the sum of €115 million. I would like to thank all delegations for engaging in a constructive manner on this important topic. My gratitude also goes to the host State and to Mexico for their contribution to cover the cost of the interim premises rent. Many thanks, on behalf of all of us, also to Ambassador Håkan Emsgård for having wrapped up the budget discussions before the Assembly session, so that we only had to spend time on a few technical details. This is a major achievement, and I truly hope that we will be able to continue in this spirit in the future.

The adoption of rule 132 *bis* of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence has also been an important achievement. I thank the Court for its initiative and hope that the issue of further amendments to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence will proceed dynamically next year.

The Assembly has adopted recommendations for the election of the Registrar of the Court, a crucial position. I hope that the recommendations will assist the judges in choosing the most qualified individual based on the merits.

* At the eighth meeting of the Assembly, on 21 November 2012.

States Parties, after some discussion, have once again agreed on a comprehensive omnibus resolution. I thank the facilitator, who has taken this task at a very short notice. After ten years, the mandate given to the Bureau, its Working Groups and the Study Group on Governance to evaluate their working methods is particularly welcome. As an Assembly, we need to be able to adapt.

We are all aware of financial challenges that our countries and the Court face. While asking the Court to identify further efficiencies and to focus on its core activities, there is also scope for thinking how to identify efficiencies in the work of the Assembly. Each new mandate given to the Bureau should be carefully weighed. We should undertake a critical review of existing mandates. All discussion should be focused on achieving concrete and tangible results. We should also be mindful of the volume of reports that the Assembly and its subsidiary organs request from the Court. The importance of high-level support to the Court and to the Rome Statute continues to be vital for the success of the Court.

As we look forward to our common activities next year it cannot be overemphasized how important the Assembly's work in the inter-sessional period is: in the Bureau as well as in The Hague and New York Working Groups. It will be important to start preparing Assembly decisions starting at the very beginning of year, through discussions in the various facilitations. The results of this session would not have been possible without the thorough work done throughout the year by the Bureau, its Working Groups, the Study Group on Governance and others. My special thanks go to the Vice-President Markus Börlin for his coordination of The Hague Working Group and to Ambassador Pieter de Savornin Lohman, the Chair of the Study Group on Governance, who is retiring. I continue to be thankful to the Secretariat for its work in supporting the Assembly, its subsidiary organs and me personally.

We can be pleased with our work at this Assembly session: I look forward to continuing to work with all of you throughout the coming year and look forward to returning to The Hague next year for the twelfth session of the Assembly.