



Statement
by
Ms. Muriel Lui, Samoa's Assistant Attorney-General,
during
13th Session, Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court
UN Headquarters, New York, 10 December 2014

Mister President,
Distinguished delegates,

Samoa congratulates you on your election to the Presidency of the Assembly and looks forward to working closely with the newly constituted Bureau under your able leadership to guide the work of this august body.

We also want to place on record our admiration to your predecessor, Ambassador Tiina Intelmann for her steadfast leadership and extensive outreach activities in the pursuit of the universality of the Rome statute.

Mister President

Samoa recently hosted the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States that had as its theme "the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States through genuine and durable partnerships".

The centrality of partnerships as a means of addressing SIDS challenges is a powerful message that resonates well with our Assembly's focus on fostering and securing collaborative partnerships towards the achievement of the mandate of the Court.

The Conference outcome, the "SAMOA Pathway" was adopted by consensus by the United Nations General Assembly on 14 November. In the said document, UN member states made specific reference on the need to promote peaceful societies and safe communities. They also reaffirmed the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights including other international instruments relating to human rights and international law and the responsibilities of all States to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind. There is also reference in the outcome document for the full realization of human rights for women and girls.

Mister President

Although the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway focuses on the sustainable development of SIDS, it is testimony nevertheless to the increasingly integrated nature of our global challenges and concerns. This is especially true for small developing countries like Samoa who must address its challenges and vulnerabilities in an integrated and holistic manner so as to protect the rights of its people and ensure the sustainable use of its limited resources.

Mr. President

Samoa understands well the value of all stakeholders working together in order to move forward as a country, as a region and as a global community. You can be assured of our readiness to support initiatives that would enhance the Court's interactions with States, regional organizations and the United Nations.

Mister President

In 2013, Samoa passed two Acts, the reformed Crimes Act and the Family Safety Act. The Samoa Family Act provides a broad framework that protects women and children who are victims of crimes including those that are sexual or gender based. Our government works closely with civil society organizations to assist victims of and witnesses to these crimes and remains committed to protecting their rights within this established legal framework.

Excellencies,

I am pleased to report that Samoa recently passed its ICC Amendment Act of 2014 which endorses the Kampala Amendments. This historic milestone, along with the aforementioned legislative reforms, underscores Samoa's firm belief in the rule of law, our commitment to the principles of the Rome statute and the judicial independence of the Court.

In this connection, Samoa re-emphasizes again the importance of the Rome Statute, especially for small island nations like ours whose stability stems from an unwavering adherence to the rule of law. Samoa urges Observer Member States and small island nations who have not done so, to ratify the Rome Statute and the Kampala Amendments.

Mister President

In closing, Samoa takes this opportunity to thank the outgoing President of the Court, Judge Song, for his leadership and contribution to the work of the Court. Likewise, we also acknowledge the outgoing panel of judges and congratulate their successors on their appointment. Our sincere appreciation is also extended to the Secretariat for their tireless efforts in facilitating the work of the Assembly.

I thank you.