

Mr. President, Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At outset, I would like to extend my deep condolence to the family of the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in France, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. The people and government of Afghanistan as victims of terrorist attacks stand with you in these sad moments.

Allow me to congratulate you for the excellent stewardship of this important gathering. My delegation is committed to working closely with you and offers you our full support. I am confident that under your wise and able stewardship the Assembly will successfully conclude its session. Also, my delegation pays tribute to the important role played by the outgoing judges, and thanks them all for their tireless efforts and devoted service to the Court.

Mr. President,

As a state party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) since 2003, Afghanistan values greatly the important role of the Court in fighting impunity, consolidating the rule of law and safeguarding and promoting human rights, consistent with International law and the goals and principles of the UN Charter. The adoption of the Rome Statute, 17 years ago, was a historic achievement and successful step forward to bring justice to victims of atrocities and heinous crimes. The Statute is an effective instrument for ending culture of impunity and a strong deterrence force to warn the criminals. It is our moral and legal responsibility to take all necessary measures at national, regional and international levels for its full implementation. We express our unequivocal support for the Statute, to the International Criminal Court and the evolving system of International criminal justice. Afghanistan has played a pioneering role on matters of International Justice. In this

regards, Afghanistan government commits support and cooperation with the ICC and in particular with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court on the preliminary examination report on Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan as a country suffered over three decades of war is victim of war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes of aggression. We concurs with the reports assessment that Taliban and other insurgent groups are responsible for killings and casualties, torture and other forms of inhuman treatment of their captures which include Afghan and foreign Nationals. For example, in recent attacks of Taliban to Kunduz, mass murder, gang rapes and house-to-house searches by Taliban death squads are just some of the harrowing civilian testimonies emerging from Kunduz. The Taliban group tracked down activists and others, and had raped and killed numerous civilians. Taliban fighters also raped female relatives and killed family members, including children, of police commanders and soldiers, especially those working for the Afghan Local Police (ALP). The Taliban also burnt down the families' houses and looted their belongings. Taliban fighters gang-raped and then killed midwives providing reproductive health services to women in the city. ISIS has beheaded 7 Afghan civilians, including children, women and men in Zabul Province.

Mr. President,

To achieve the goals of the Statute and for the full realization of the lofty ideals of this important international instrument, we need to broaden the reach of the ICC. It is very unfortunate to see that many countries that are sharing our commitments in fighting impunity, protecting victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity and bringing justice to them,

have not joined us in practice, and have not acceded to this important international instrument. We hope that in the interest of peace, justice and universality, these countries, through accession to the Statute, convey to those committing war crimes and crimes against humanity, that the entire world is united in the fight against those in power, that from now, can no longer ignore shadow of international and criminal justice. By standing together and by showing determination that no crime will go unpunished, we will give the message that, the days of reckless decision making and gross violations of human rights are over.

Thank you for your attention!