



STATEMENT

by

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At the General Debate

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World Forum

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Mr. President, members of the Assembly, distinguished delegates, officials of the Court, ladies and gentlemen.

Sweden aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Mr. President,

Allow me first to congratulate you on your first year in office as President of this Assembly. Sweden is committed to continue supporting you in this important role.

Mr. President,

With the violent conflicts of today we are constantly confronted with reports of appalling crimes against women and girls, men and boys - all victims of incomprehensible violence and cruelty. Rape, sexual slavery and other sexual and gender-based violence have been taken to new horrific levels as is the case in the conflicts in Syria and in Iraq. There must be an end to the violence. There must be accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims of these heinous crimes. We therefore renew our call on the United Nations Security Council to refer the situation in Syria to the ICC and call on Iraq to accede to the Rome Statute, as a matter of priority.

Mr. President,

The ICC is unique as it is the only permanent international criminal court for serious crimes of international concern. It is also a victims-Court because of the unique standing of victims provided for in the Rome Statute. The ICC gives hope to victims all over the world who demand justice.

The ICC, however, cannot provide justice to all victims of Rome Statute crimes on its own. Ending impunity and ensuring access to justice for victims are shared goals of the Court and all States Parties to the Rome Statute. Serious crimes of international concern are often complex and their investigation and prosecution may need international cooperation to succeed. Joint efforts between states and the court are vital to the viability of the Rome Statute system.

As co-focal point for complementarity together with Botswana, Sweden has a special responsibility for joint efforts. This year we have facilitated two workshops on national level in Guatemala and Uganda. The participants exchanged experiences and practices in the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based crimes. For all of you that did not have the possibility to attend the very interesting workshops it is possible to see some key recommendations in a booklet from the International Development Law

Organization. Even better, tomorrow at three PM in the plenary, there will be a high-level panel discussion on action to enhance national capacity to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based crimes that may amount to Rome Statute crimes. I encourage everyone to take part in the discussion.

Mr. President,

The increased caseload of the ICC testifies that it is as relevant as ever. The Court needs States and States need the Court. It is therefore crucial that States offer their full cooperation to the Court without which it cannot fulfill its important mandate. Voluntary agreements play a key role in this regard. It is therefore timely that the issue of cooperation through voluntary agreements is to be addressed in a panel discussion at this Assembly session. We urge all States parties to enter into such agreements in order to share responsibility and enable the Court to work effectively.

It is also to be welcomed that the efficiency and effectiveness of the Court is addressed during this session. The initiatives of ICC-president Fernández de Gurmendi in this area have our full support.

Mr. President,

Sweden remains a committed supporter of a viable, independent, effective and efficient International Criminal Court and continues to strive for its universality and integrity. Victims of atrocious crimes deserve no less.

Thank you for your attention.