



SWEDEN

**STATEMENT**

by

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**At the General Debate**

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

Allow me first to express my Government's sincere appreciation to the Court and its officials, in all organs. Your work continues to make significant contributions to accountability for perpetrators and justice for victims of serious crimes of international concern.

Mr. President,

Women and girls, men and boys continue to be victims of appalling crimes committed in violent conflicts around the world. They deserve justice. Rape, sexual slavery and other sexual and gender-based violence have been taken to new horrific levels. This is the case in the conflicts in Syria and in Iraq. It is unacceptable that perpetrators, including members of Daesh, continue to commit crimes with impunity. 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. We should in the meantime strengthen our collective efforts to ensure that conditions are created for justice to be done.

Mr. President,

Ending impunity and ensuring access to justice for victims are shared goals of the Court and all States Parties to the Rome Statute. As co-focal point for complementarity together with Botswana we have been exploring how to implement the principle of complementarity. We should build on the advances made to counter sexual and gender-based crimes through national investigations and prosecutions. Further cooperation is needed to overcome remaining challenges and obstacles. The Policy Paper of the ICC Prosecutor has been an essential guide in our work.

We thank the Court, all States and stakeholders for their cooperation and support of our activities. We believe that stronger cooperation between international, regional and national actors is needed. Further efforts should continue to engage civil society organizations and international development assistance. We welcome the Prosecutor's new Policy on Children which may in a similar way contribute to strengthened protection of particularly vulnerable victims.

Mr. President,

The rights of victims is an important feature of the ICC. This is not least demonstrated by the increasing activities, and corresponding need for more resources, of the Trust Fund for Victims. I am pleased to announce a new substantial Swedish contribution to the Fund for three years (2017-2019) of a total amount of [30 million Swedish crowns]

or approximately 3 million euro. We invite other States to contribute and engage actively with the Fund.

Mr. President,

In Rome in 1998 States and people from all over the world came together to create the first permanent international criminal court the world has seen. Without the active contribution of States from all regions there would be no ICC. The commitment of African States has been manifested in the many ratifications of the Rome Statute on the continent. We have also seen a number of referrals of situations to the ICC from African States Parties. We believe that the ICC needs more States Parties, not less. We should join forces for more States from all regions to join the Court.

It is therefore with a sad heart that we have learnt of the decisions of South Africa, Burundi and the Gambia to withdraw from the ICC. Sweden stands ready to listen – during as well as after this Assembly meeting – to concerns and challenges experienced by States in their relations with the ICC. . Courage, constructiveness and ingenuity are needed with the aim to find solutions in this Assembly. We remain willing to engage in dialogue within the framework of the Rome Statute that can overcome differences and which respects the integrity of the Court.

I thank you for your attention.