



Cooperation Plenary

Assembly of States Parties 2018

Cooperation Agreements

Remarks by Registrar Peter Lewis

7 December 2018, The Hague

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Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to just say a few overall words about the importance of these voluntary cooperation agreements.

States Parties have been extremely generous over the years in building the magnificent edifice that the Court occupies here in The Hague. Just as important is building the edifice of the operational cooperation that is essential to the Court.

We have been enormously lucky that we have had the cooperation of a number of States Parties who have signed voluntary cooperation agreements with us that have allowed us to function as a Court, that have looked after our witnesses and victims, have taken convicted defendants, and provided so much other help as well.

But, it is still a small number of States that have provided these essential building blocks for the Court and it is really important now not to rely too extensively on those who have already done so much. More agreements signed allow us to share the load between States, but also to give us greater flexibility for the future.

Allow me to say three brief words about what characterizes these agreements. The first is about their flexibility: these are voluntary agreements, and the voluntary nature of the cooperation remains throughout the fact that States are always contacted before we ask them for their help and before we finally conclude any agreements.

The other issue I want to mention is the issue of the cooperative nature of these agreements. Having been fortunate enough to see some of these activities at work (say for example, witness cooperation and protection), I can assure you that they are marked by a fantastic spirit of cooperation where we all learn from each other.

Finally, I just want to mention that these agreements, if you require them to be confidential, they can be. In some of these agreements, particularly regarding witness protection, States have asked us if we would be discrete about the existence of these agreements, and we certainly confirmed our commitment in that regard.

Thank you.