

**STATEMENT BY H.E. Dr. Mohammad Homayoon Azizi,
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the Netherlands
Statement at the 17th Session of ASP to the Rome Statute of the ICC
The Hague, 6 December 2018**

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

In a world where humanity itself is the main victim of the crimes and acts of their fellow humans, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is an inevitable need. We believe that justice for all should be a vision of every government and society, and to reach this goal we need to work to strengthen the court by supporting its decisions.

As the representative of Afghanistan, I can say that our trust in international justice has made Afghanistan, among the first countries to join the Rome Statute in 2003, and over the course of the last 15 years, we kept all the commitments.

Mr. President

As you know, Afghanistan is a victim of terrorism. We fight at the forefront of the combat against global terrorism and we suffer the largest number of sacrifices in the war against global terrorism.

Recent UNAMA figures indicate that already in the first nine months of 2018, till the end of September, 2,798 civilians were killed in Afghanistan and 5,252 other civilians wounded. This is very painful for us.

Although the role of any of the groups involved in Afghanistan cannot be denied in these casualties, it's clear that, most of them have been victims of violence of extremist terrorists, which includes more than 20 terrorist groups. These groups, including the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, Daesh and other terrorist groups and extremists, often commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, which are a flagrant violation of international humanitarian Law and human rights and a menace for our society.

The situation of Afghanistan has been one of the ten cases monitored by the Office of the prosecutor (OTP) that completed the preliminary

examination. We are complying with our obligations to the court and we are completely ready to cooperate in the framework of a common road map towards justice and rule of law.

We have established the judicial infrastructure necessary to deal with cases and prosecute and punish the perpetrators of crimes in the jurisdiction of the ICC, in order to reach the common Goals of all member states of this assembly subscribing to the statute. Amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as the adoption of a new Criminal Code that recognizes those crimes that are at jurisdiction of ICC, are examples of such activities. and establishment of a general directorate for combat against international crimes is another example. These kinds of activities are continuing.

In this section, we hope that there will be further international cooperation to strengthen the judiciary and achieve the necessary capabilities of Afghanistan.

Mr. President

We believe that there is a strong relationship between justice, peace and security. The realization of criminal justice and punishment of perpetrators is easier in post-conflict situations, and experience in history has shown that it is difficult to reach a reasonable and acceptable justice during a conflict.

As Afghanistan is still in a state of conflict, we hope to focus on the realities of Afghan society on the path to justice. The fragile security and political situation as a reality is that it has direct connection with peace and security, and it is necessary to take serious consideration during the proceedings and investigations of the ICC.

In the end, I emphasize that we believe in justice and will stand with ICC to ensure the welfare and human rights of all people.

Thank You.