

AMBAXXATA
TAR-REPUBBLIKA TA' MALTA



EMBASSY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA

THE HAGUE

Mr President

Malta associates itself with the EU statement delivered by the Austrian Presidency.

My delegation joins others in thanking you, Mr. President, the Bureau members, the Secretariat and the various facilitators for their work in preparing for this Assembly. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Horslund and the new Board Members of the Trust Fund for Victims on their appointment.

Justice and accountability present responsibilities and obligations that the international community must not only uphold but also consistently safeguard. It is imperative that perpetrators of heinous crimes against humanity are brought to justice. Countering injustice and impunity puts victims at the core of the Court's work and we owe this to the victims.

It is in this spirit that Malta has been supportive of the International Criminal Court. Celebrating 20 years since the adoption of the Rome Statute is an opportunity for all of us to not only reflect on the achievements, but also on its future and how we can do more and do better in the next 20 years.

Today more than ever, we need to continue to reinvigorate our efforts to ensure that the Court has the support and the resources it needs to carry out its mandate and do its work. This Session is being held at a challenging time when we are witnessing increased conflict. Ongoing reports of crimes against humanity, genocide, gender-based violence and crimes of aggression are deplorable. The activation of the crime of aggression reaffirms once again the commitment to the Rome Convention.

The very existence of the ICC is the most tangible way of telling perpetrators of these crimes that the international community stands united against impunity. This is a time to stand behind our common values and principles and Malta joins others in calling for the universality of the Court. In the meantime, Malta joins others in its unwavering support to the Court. We need to exhaust all the possibilities given to

CARNEGIELAAN 4-14, 2517 KH, THE HAGUE

TEL. +31 70 360 2205, 356 1252

FAX +31 70 346 4796

MALTAEMBASSY.THEHAGUE@GOV.MT

us by the Rome Statute to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and that justice is served. This is crucial for sustainable peace.

The responsibility of bringing offenders to justice will always predominantly lie with the States. This fulfils the core principle of Complementarity that is established by Article 1 of the Rome Statute. By focusing on its core task, the Court can be more effective. Effectiveness and efficiency in its operation as well as the promotion of its independence strengthen the Court's credibility. This is critical going forward.

As we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Rome Statute together, we also look at this event as a challenge for us, the State Parties, to redouble our collective efforts and to ensure that 20 years from now we will look back on this year as representing not only an anniversary but as an opportunity to continue to strengthen the Court – in the years to come also in terms of gender and geographical representation as well as another significant milestone in delivering international criminal justice.

Thank you.