

19th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International
Criminal Court

Statement by H. E. Mr. Martin Smolek, Deputy Minister for Legal and Consular
Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic fully supports the statement of the European Union and wishes to add a few remarks in its national capacity.

This year marked the 75th anniversary of commencement of the Nuremberg trials and, at the same time, 70 years passed since the formulation of the Nuremberg Principles by the International Law Commission and their adoption by the UN General Assembly. We believe that the legacy of the Nuremberg trials and resulting Nuremberg Principles should not be forgotten, since they laid foundations for the modern international criminal justice.

Despite the challenges posed by the ongoing pandemic of COVID-19, this Assembly of States Parties has to fulfil its functions, in particular to hold the elections of new judges and prosecutor.

Without any doubt, only the election of the most qualified judges will ensure that the Court will be able to deliver justice to the victims and to the international community without unnecessary delays. In fact, the judicial activity of the Court is crucial and serves as the best Court's outreach. The same applies to the election of a new prosecutor that should be done - in line with the established practice - by consensus. However, consensus itself is not the ultimate goal; it is only an excellent candidate who can generate consensual support among the States Parties.

We are ready to take part in the forthcoming process aimed at strengthening the Rome Statute system and making the Court more effective. This collective undertaking deserves utmost attention of all of us who firmly support the rule of law and multilateralism. The Court has its irreplaceable role in the fight against impunity and, as such, deserves protection against any external pressures.

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic presented its candidature to the Bureau of the Assembly for the upcoming period. If elected, we are looking forward to contribute to the work of the Assembly.

We, as States Parties, should not forget our longstanding tasks of ensuring cooperation with the Court and, in addition, continue with ratification of latest amendments to Article 8 of the Rome Statute, as they provide greater protection to victims of crimes under international law. Finally, let me mention that the Czech Republic will financially contribute to the Trust Fund for Victims also this year.

Thank you, Mr. President