



Statement on behalf of the Republic of Bulgaria
At the
Twentieth Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome
Statute of the International Criminal Court
(The Hague, 6-11 December 2021)

*Written submission by H.E. Mr. Konstantin Dimitrov,
Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Kingdom of The Netherlands*

Mr. President,
Distinguished members of the Court,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour of submitting this written statement on behalf of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The Republic of Bulgaria fully aligns itself with the ASP-20 Statement delivered on behalf of the EU and its Member States and would like to make the following statement in its national capacity:

Let me begin by congratulating the new president and the newly elected members of the Court. Bulgaria also welcomes the election of the new Chief Prosecutor Mr. Karim Kahn. We are confident that you all will most skillfully guide the ICC in fulfilling its mandate. Our delegation is committed to supporting you in this crucial role, and we look forward to working with you.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Fatou Bensouda for her dedicated work, leadership and professionalism over the past 17 years.

Bulgaria reiterates its staunch longstanding commitment and support to the Rome Statute system representing the very foundation of the rule-based international order, which still, in the current dynamic context, requires maintaining our common sustainable approach focused on preserving the integrity, and judicial and prosecutorial independence of the ICC.

The Court, as well as the international community, is faced with a myriad of grave global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, along with a broad spectrum of individual critical issues such as the economic and financial crisis. This inevitably reflects on one of our paramount priorities – safeguarding the efficient and undisturbed functioning of the ICC on the basis of a stable and target-based budgeting process. We would like to seize this opportunity to call upon states in arrears to settle their outstanding contributions.

In this context, we would like to commend the efforts made in the budget facilitation based upon the wide-ranging recommendations of the Committee on Budget and Finance aimed at identifying proper mechanisms for realizing savings in the proposed budget for 2022, while maintaining the

Court's capacity to perform in light of the anticipated increase in its workload.

Bulgaria acknowledges the extensive work of the ICC Review Mechanism tasked by the Assembly to carry out an in-depth scrutiny of the Rome Statute System. This process brings together all stakeholders on the way forward through an open and intensive interaction, which aims at upholding the work of the Court and its ability to deliver justice to victims of atrocity crimes and to provide assistance and award reparations to them.

Mr. President,

Next year we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute's entry into force. This is an opportune time to further engage in strengthening justice; an opportunity to combat impunity, uphold the rule of law, and take stock of the Court's record.

As a longstanding supporter of the ICC, Bulgaria joins others in calling for universality of the ICC, because together we can make a change!

Thank you!