



**REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE**

Check against delivery

STATEMENT

by Mr. Gordan MARKOTIĆ

Director General

**SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL
COURT**

Den Haag, 14 – 22 November 2008

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Republic of Croatia at this 7th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

First of all, I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Croatia remains committed to supporting the International Criminal Court. The Republic of Croatia supports the integrity, independence and efficient functioning of the ICC.

Let me remind you that the Republic of Croatia already at the very beginning accepted and supported both the idea and the activities of the UN aimed at the establishment of a permanent International Criminal Court.

The Republic of Croatia has been a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court since 2002. Croatia was the first state of South Eastern Europe that ratified the Rome Statute.

Today when 108 countries are States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court we are very pleased with the fact that the Republic of Croatia has participated from the very beginning in all Court activities.

For Croatia the existence of an institution like the International Criminal Court is of great importance. As you all know Croatia is a country that was heavily affected by the war. On a daily basis we deal with its consequences, especially through the work of the *ad hoc* established International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. That is one of the reasons why Croatia strongly supports ICC as an international institution devoted to the implementation of criminal adjudication for the purpose of international justice.

We strongly believe that the commission of the gravest criminal offences can only be prevented by the universal application of the Rome Statute. In this sense the priorities of the Republic of Croatia continue to be the realization of full cooperation with the International Criminal Court and active participation in the activities of the Court.

As a candidate country for EU membership, Croatia has been continuously supporting the EU's common positions and statements in connection with the International Criminal Court and the cooperation with the International Criminal Court is one of the points in the National Plan for the Accession to the European Union for the year 2009.

Prior to proceeding with the program of the Working Group on the budget I would like to point out that Croatia considers that having a sufficient and transparent budget as well as receiving contributions from State Parties on time is of great importance for the work of the Court.

Let me also use this opportunity to underline that Croatia supports the work of the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression and hopes that the scheduled program of activities could be achieved. Croatia strongly endorses all efforts made to provide a definition of the crime of aggression and hopes that the definition is going to be adopted in the near future on all States Parties' satisfaction.

Finally, I wish the Assembly much success in its work.

Thank you.