

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**REMARKS TO THE NINTH ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE
ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
New York, 6 December 2010**

Your Excellency Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President of Colombia,
Your Excellency Ambassador Christian Wenaweser, President of the Assembly of States
Parties,
Honourable Judge Sang-Hyun Song, President of the Court,
Honourable Prosecutor, Mr. Luis Moreno Ocampo,
Madam Registrar, Silvana Arbia,
Madam Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims, Elisabeth
Rehn,
Honourable judges,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you to the Ninth Session of the Assembly of States
Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

At your last meeting, in Kampala, you made history. You fulfilled the promise of
Rome and completed the ICC Statute by agreeing on the definition of the crime of
aggression ... and you agreed on the conditions under which the Court is to exercise its
jurisdiction with respect to that crime. These are landmark achievements.

Now it is time to build on these accomplishments. I encourage all States parties to
ratify the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute.

The international community has overwhelmingly embraced the idea that we have
entered an age of accountability, and that there can be absolutely no immunity for
international crimes.

But make no mistake: to prevail in the fight against impunity, we must stay on the
offence. At a time when international justice is under attack in many places, we must
strengthen our resolve to shut the door on the era of impunity and ensure that in this new
era, perpetrators truly answer for their crimes.

I wish to emphasize, in this respect, the crucial importance of States complying
with their responsibilities to enforce all outstanding arrest warrants.

The ICC faces challenges in consolidating itself as an indispensable part of the community of international organizations. The Court does not yet enjoy universal support. There are misunderstandings about when, where and how it should act.

The battle for trust in the ICC must be won in the courtroom. That is the place to prove to the world that the Court can deliver on its noble mandate -- independently, impartially and without regard to political considerations.

Warrants of arrest and summonses have been issued ... suspects have been arrested and brought to the Court ... some have even arrived on their own. Proceedings are under way.

But the trials need to be completed expeditiously, in a manner that instills confidence in the Court and in its ability to achieve justice clearly and transparently for all the world to see.

The ICC is the centerpiece of our system of international criminal justice. If we are serious about combating impunity and promoting accountability, we must support its work.

Our generation has the opportunity to decisively advance the cause of justice and prevent horrendous suffering.

If we fail to heed Kampala's call, we fail humanity.

With that in mind, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, I wish you success in your important deliberations.

Thank you very much.