

Election of judges: Voting and counting the ballots

The election of judges by the Assembly of States Parties entails the participation of two groups of tellers, as well as of conference officers. One person from each of these groups provides some insight into the special procedure followed in these elections. Unlike the case of other elected officials, the four elections for judges since 2003 have been held at United Nations Headquarters.

CONFERENCE OFFICER

Mr. Dannel Price



On how many occasions have you been involved in assisting with elections of the Court?

Twice, in January 2009 and November 2007.

Can you describe your role in the distribution of the ballots?

First I have to assemble a team of five meeting servicing assistants as my office needs to provide as many staff as there are national tellers. Second, using the seating chart of the conference room I divide the room into as many sections as there are teams of tellers/meeting servicing assistants. Ballots received from the Secretariat of the Assembly are then carefully counted with each meetings servicing assistant receiving the exact number of ballots corresponding to his/her section. As the time to start the voting process approaches my team take position at their respective section of the

conference room. When the President announces that "ballot papers are now being distributed" I give them a signal to start doing so as sometimes they cannot hear the President. I watch the distribution very carefully from that point on ready to respond to any unusual occurrence and await by the podium the report of each of our staff distributing the ballot papers. If they were able to hand out all their ballots then they have nothing to declare; however, if one or more State Party was absent then the corresponding number of ballots is returned and the name of each missing State Party is conveyed through me to the Secretary of the Assembly. Thus every single ballot paper is accounted for. The national tellers then join us in front of the podium and, when so instructed by the President, we proceed to collect the ballot papers. I watch the process carefully again looking for anything that would require my intervention even though a national teller accompanies each one of my staff. As long as the President has not yet announced that "the voting is now closed", a State Party that has not received a ballot paper because the respective delegate was not in the room at the time of initial distribution can approach the podium, identify himself/herself and receive a ballot paper from the Secretary. After collection I insure that the ballot boxes are brought to a designated room for counting.

Once in the secluded "counting room" the ballot boxes are opened before the President and tellers, the ballots are placed on the table and my team exits the room to await the announcement of the results by the President. After counting, if the vote is inconclusive the process is repeated as often as necessary until the required number of judges is elected.

How would you compare the balloting for the January 2009 election with that of the November 2007 election to fill three judicial vacancies?

The January 2009 balloting took quite a bit longer as six judges were to be elected.

Is there a difference between the role of a conference officer in the ASP process as compared with similar elections by secret ballot in the General Assembly of the United Nations?

The role is basically the same. There is no room for error in either place as a mistake from our part would invalidate a round of voting and necessitate it to be repeated.

Are you ready for another election?

Definitely.

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Composition of the judges

At their 14th plenary meeting held on 13 March 2009, the judges of the International Criminal Court decided on their assignment to the Pre-Trial, Trial and Appeals Divisions of the Court, in accordance with rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

The composition of the judges of these divisions is as follows:

Pre-Trial Division *

- **Mr. Hans-Peter Kaul** (Germany, list B,
Second Vice-President of the Court)
- **Ms. Sylvia Steiner** (Brazil, list A)
- **Ms. Ekaterina Trendafilova** (Bulgaria, list A)
- **Ms. Sanji Mmasenono Monageng** (Botswana, list B)
- **Mr. Cuno Tarfusser** (Italy, list A)

* Judge Fumiko Saiga had been designated to be part of the Pre-Trial Division.

Trial Division

- **Ms. Fatoumata Dembele Diarra** (Mali, list A,
First Vice-President of the Court)
- **Ms. Elizabeth Odio Benito** (Costa Rica, list A)
- **Mr. René Blattmann** † (Bolivia, list B)
- **Mr. Adrian Fulford** (United Kingdom, list A)
- **Mr. Bruno Cotte** (France, list A)
- **Ms. Joyce Aluoch** (Kenya, list A)
- **Ms. Christine Van den Wyngaert** (Belgium, list A)

Appeals Division

- **Mr. Sang-Hyun Song** (Republic of Korea, list A,
President of the Court)
- **Ms. Akua Kuenyehia** (Ghana, list B)
- **Mr. Erkki Kourula** (Finland, list B)
- **Ms. Anita Ušacka** (Latvia, list B)
- **Mr. Daniel David Ntanda Nsereko** (Uganda, list A)

† It should be noted that Mr. René Blattmann (Bolivia), who upon his election in February 2003 was selected by lot to serve for a term of six years, will continue in office to complete the trial of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo before Trial Chamber I, in accordance with article 36 (10) of the Rome Statute.

Election of judges: Voting and counting the ballots (2)

NATIONAL TELLER

Ms. Eva Šurková
Third Secretary
Permanent Mission of
Slovakia to the United
Nations



What are some of your regular functions as a delegate?

As a human rights expert with our Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York I deal with all of the human rights issues, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, etc. I cover sessions of the Economic Social and Cultural Committee of the United Nations General Assembly but also some items on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council. Furthermore, I perform the duties of an election officer.

What were your expectations of the role as national teller?

This was my first experience in an electoral process as a teller. In 2007 I had already participated as a delegate for the previous elections of judges for the Court; at that time I told myself that it would be interesting to take part in such elections as a teller. So I did not hesitate to volunteer as a teller at the first possible occasion. I was expecting to learn about the electoral process of electing judges for such an important judicial institution. In 2006 I organized an international conference “The International Criminal Court at the beginning of the 21st century” in Slovakia with judge Erkki Kourula, representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Austrian, Czech and Slovak Faculties of Law. I appreciate participating in any event where I can learn more about the Court, including elections.

What main differences do you see vis-à-vis other elections held at United Nations Headquarters?

When compared with other elections held at the UN, I find the elections for judges of the Court to be extremely important. The reason is that the Court was established to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious international crimes defined in the Rome Statute like genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is therefore in the interest of all States to present the most qualified candidates; the beneficiary of electing the best judges is thus the international community. The personality, qualification, moral character, impartiality and integrity of candidates play a greater role than elsewhere.

How would you view the ASP process compared with similar elections by secret ballot in the General Assembly in terms of the time involved in the balloting and counting?

The overall process of electing judges to the Court formally begins 26 weeks before the election with the opening of the nomination period and thus usually takes longer than any other election. The nomination procedure as well as the elections are complicated given the need to comply simultaneously with geographical region and gender criteria, in addition to the list A or list B criteria that relate to the specialization of the candidates. The process must be carried out in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute, including possible extensions of the nomination period for up to six weeks when the minimum requirements are not met. Personally, I do not believe that the balloting and counting themselves take that much time. In case candidates do not obtain the required two-thirds majority of the votes additional rounds of balloting are held. However, delegates as well as tellers are aware of this fact.

What is the role of a national teller?

National tellers are delegates from Permanent Missions to the United Nations who have been designated by the Assembly upon the recommendation of the regional groups via the Bureau. They are not nationals of States with candidates. Each of the five regional groups has the right to nominate one teller and they all have equal standing. Being a teller means bearing responsibility for collecting the secret ballots, then together with the Secretariat tellers, counting them correctly and, if necessary, taking decisions on the validity of the ballot in uncertain cases. Being a teller might seem underestimated in some quarters yet it constitutes a very important function with a lot of responsibility. It merits recalling that the President of the Assembly, who presides over the balloting and counting and who is with the tellers during the entire time, is ultimately responsible for the election procedure.

Given the high number of candidates for the six positions of judges, how long did you expect the voting and counting to last?

I was expecting the election of both judges and members of the Committee of Budget and Finance (CBF) to take the entire week. Finally it was not that difficult, “just” nine rounds for the election of the judges, elections which took about a day and a half. On the other hand, the need to hold a vote to elect two members of the CBF from the Asian Group was a surprise for me.

Would you consider the time devoted to the counting of the votes to be lengthy?

Not at all, it was adequate without any doubt, we even had time for “double counting” the votes, which is key to ensuring an accurate result.

Is there any particular moment you may wish to share?

I will never forget an emotional moment after the announcement of the election results. While passing near a newly elected judge of a State known for overt expressions of feelings we suddenly received thousands of kisses from the entire delegation! Their joy, emotions and gratitude to all supporting States Parties were truly touching.

Given that a new election would be held in the coming months to fill a vacancy, if so designated would you have any suggestions to make on the counting process?

From my point of view the elections were held in an absolutely appropriate manner. The whole electoral process, time allocated for counting and announcing the results – everything was performed in a very professional manner, especially thanks to the President of the Assembly and the staff of the Secretariat. Under these circumstances it was a veritable pleasure to be a teller. I acquired new experiences and met many interesting people. So, as you can imagine I really enjoyed the elections and look forward to the next one.



From left, second row: The national tellers, Mr. Naseer Ahmad Faiq (Afghanistan), Ms. Pilar Serrano (Spain), Ms. Eva Šurková (Slovakia) and Mr. Justin Kisoka (United Republic of Tanzania), prepare to accompany the meeting servicing assistants to collect the ballots. © ICC-CPI

**SECRETARIAT
TELLER**

Ms. Gabrijela Filipović
Secretariat of the
Assembly of States
Parties



How many times have you performed the functions of a Secretariat teller?

Twice, at the sixth session of the Assembly in November 2007 and at the first resumption of the seventh session, held in January 2009.

Would you be able to indicate any differences between the elections you took part in?

There were two main differences. The January 2009 election required more time as six judges were to be elected, as opposed to three in 2007. In addition, in January the Assembly had a round of balloting to elect the two Asian members of the Committee on Budget and Finance as well.

What was your role as a Secretariat teller in the balloting process?

My role in the balloting process was to assist the national teller during the counting phase of the election. The ballots were organized into sets of 21 (with one set having 24), each of which was "double counted" (i.e. counted by two tellers separately). The ballots were then divided into five sets and one set was given to each of the five teams of national and Secretariat tellers. The teams then proceeded to different parts of the room to count their respective ballots. This was done in two phases: first, each ballot was checked by the national and Secretariat teller, for validity in terms of the minimum voting requirements. The tellers then turned to counting the votes for each candidate, the national teller reading out the name and the Secretariat teller making the corresponding mark on the counting sheet. Once the counting was completed the teller's report was filled in, indicating the number of ballots counted, the number of invalid ballots, the number of valid ballots, the number of abstentions, the number of States Parties present and voting as well as the results for each

candidate. Each national teller then signed his/her teller's report, and proceeded together with the Secretariat teller to report to the President of the Assembly on the outcome of the counting.

In addition to the counting of the votes, I was responsible as well for tracking the timing of the balloting and counting process.

Can you tell us how long the balloting and the counting took for the nine rounds held in January 2009?

| | 19 January - afternoon | | 20 January - morning | | | 20 January - afternoon | | | |
|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | 1 st round | 2 nd round | 3 rd round | 4 th round | 5 th round | 6 th round | 7 th round | 8 th round | 9 th round |
| Balloting | 15 min. | 10 min. | 5 min. | 5 min. | 5 min. | 10 min. | 10 min. | 5 min. | 5 min. |
| Counting | 60 min. | 40 min. | 40 min. | 60 min. | 50 min. | 20 min. | 10 min. | 10 min. | 10 min. |

What is the range of time it took your counting team to provide the partial results to the President of the Assembly?

Approximately 30-45 minutes to count the votes during the first rounds and 5-10 minutes for the last few rounds.

What occurs once the President has received the partial results from the five counting teams?

The President reviews the invalid ballots and tallies the partial results manually to get the total results. Once that is done, he reads out the results to the five teams. The official President's report on the result of that particular ballot is then prepared in electronic format and signed by the five national tellers and the President. The Secretariat then has to adjust the President's notes regarding the results of that round. If the intention is to hold another round of voting immediately, the Secretariat must then prepare and print a new ballot, as well as a second set of notes for the following round of balloting. This requires reflecting adequately any changes to the minimum voting requirements for lists A and B, for geographical regions and for gender. Furthermore, some minutes are also required to make sets of the newly printed ballots for distribution to the different meeting servicing assistants.

Can you tell us how a withdrawal of a candidate affects the balloting and the counting process?

From the Secretariat point of view, there are two implications. After each round of counting, new ballots are prepared and printed on different colour paper so that the next round can begin immediately after the announcement of the results. A withdrawal of a candidate, especially when it occurs only a few minutes before the beginning of the next round of balloting, means that the Secretariat needs to

modify and reproduce the ballots again, which must be done expeditiously in order not to delay the process. On some occasions, it is faster to cross-out the names of some candidates on the printed hardcopies, as occurred during the fourth round when three candidates withdrew and the new ballots had already been distributed among the five meeting servicing assistants.

On the other hand, a withdrawal of a candidate means that the counting takes less time as well. However, that does not necessarily lead to a quicker election of the remaining candidates since the votes may nonetheless remain split among the different candidates impeding the two-thirds majority requirement from being met.

What happens to the ballots after the election?

The ballots are sealed in envelopes, taken back to The Hague and stored in a safe in the Secretariat of the Assembly.

How far in advance does the Secretariat begin preparations for an election?

Approximately one year in advance by preparing background information for the Bureau and then sending a note verbale to Embassies in The Hague and Brussels as well as to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations wherein it informs States about the opening of the nomination period for the elections and the minimum voting requirements applicable to that election. The information on the nominations is voluminous: approximately 202 pages per language which must be edited, translated, printed, posted on the website and mailed to States. The Secretariat also organizes a mock-election a few days before the respective session of the Assembly to familiarize new delegates and national tellers with the voting process.



From left: The national teller for the Group of Eastern European States, Ms. Eva Šurková, observes as Mr. Stefan Barriga (Liechtenstein) casts a ballot. © ICC-CPI

There is some criticism resulting from comparisons between the time for trials to get started and concluded in other tribunals and the cases before the Court. How would the Court respond to those views?

We are still in the early days, and comparisons are premature. There is a broad commitment to efficiency. The Appeals Division in which I sit, for example, is dedicated to prioritizing those interlocutory appeals on which a continuation of trial or pre-trial proceedings depend. We are also turning around appeals on a timely basis.

It should also be noted that the ICC is quite different from its predecessors in important ways. The Court has a prospective and not a retroactive mandate. This meant that upon beginning of operations, it was dealing with very current situations. Alleged crimes that had just recently been committed – all after 1 July 2002 – needed to be investigated, and the Prosecutor's investigations were taking place during active conflicts. At our sister tribunals, with the partial exception of the ICTY, most investigative work has been conducted in more stable post-conflict environments.

As the world's first permanent international criminal court, the ICC faces unique challenges. We are not focused on a single conflict or region, but must address several at once. The diversity of situations before the Court creates a diversity of challenges in many areas, including language use in the courtroom and the logistics of witness protection and transport. Unlike the ICTR, ICTY or the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the Rome Statute also provides for victim participation in the proceedings. This innovation creates challenges of a legal and logistical nature that the Court has had to work through over the course of its first judicial proceedings.

Is the Court considering means of expediting the length of its proceedings and is there a mechanism for their periodic assessment?

We are not yet through our first judicial cycle, but already the Court is making adjustments in order to streamline proceedings. For example, the Registry, responding to a decision by Chambers, has facilitated victims participating in the trials to have group rather than individual representation. There are constant discussions about judicial efficiency and there is a strong commitment to the Strategic plan's most important objective: conducting fair and expeditious trials. I can assure you that the judges are committed to conducting expeditious trials, foremost because this is a core right of the accused. But in some



From left: Mrs. Magda Marešová and H.E. Mr. Petr Mareš, Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the Netherlands, President Sang-Hyun Song, and H.E. Mr. Jorge Lomónaco, Vice-President of the Assembly at the welcoming ceremony

instances speed can otherwise conflict with fairness. Then judges have a solemn duty to err on the side of the latter.

What is the status of the Court Capacity Model (CCM), which the Court began to develop in 2004 in order to assist it in planning its proceedings?

The Court is using the model in its planning, but the model will need to be adjusted as experience is gained through the conduct of trials. As I've mentioned, the Court has not yet completed a full judicial cycle. Once a few trials are completed, much more accurate data will feed into the model, making this a much more useful planning tool.

As at the end of September, have all 16 judges been called to serve at the seat of the Court?

Yes, and in fact there are now 17 judges including Judge Blattmann, who will remain for the duration of the Lubanga trial although his term otherwise would have expired earlier this year. We eagerly await the arrival of two new colleagues following the forthcoming election.

How do the judges interact among themselves?

The judges work extraordinarily hard to fulfil the mandate with which they have been entrusted. Upon taking up their mandate, of course every judge first interacts with new colleagues on a professional basis. But even at this stage, they already share a deep dedication to this Court and its mission. Over time they develop much stronger professional and personal bonds. I think I can speak for all of the judges when I say that working with colleagues from diverse national and legal backgrounds is mutually stimulating and simply fascinating. Apart from the usual one-three plenary sessions each year, judges also have informal meetings to exchange views. Each member of the Presidency belongs to one of the three divisions, and this helps to facilitate interaction with the divisions and all judges between meetings.

Are video/telephone conferences held to communicate with judges that may not be in The Hague?

The ICC is a criminal court and sometimes important judicial decisions have to be taken within hours. Generally speaking, the judges of the Court are always contactable, even when on leave, in order to react quickly to unforeseen and urgent developments. Information technology may be an important tool in this respect. I can certainly confirm this to be the case for the Appeals Division. The President of the Court is an ex officio member of the Appeals Division, but in fulfilling important external relations duties as President, also must travel frequently. In the past and current Presidencies, there have been numerous telephone conferences to ensure that even in the absence of the President or other colleagues, appellate deliberations can stay on track.

Are there forums where the Court's judges may exchange views with prior judges or colleagues from other tribunals?

There are periodic meetings of the Judicial Club of The Hague, which allow judges from the ICC, the International Court of Justice, the ICTY, and the Dutch Supreme Court to exchange views and share experiences. This forum rotates among the tribunals. There are also many opportunities to meet informally around The Hague, at lectures, book signings and other events, where ideas can also be exchanged.

Election of judges

You recently asked the Bureau to expedite the election to fill judicial vacancies in order to ease the workload of the current bench. Since 2007, five judicial vacancies occurred, one the result of an untimely passing away of a judge. Does the Court have any suggestion for consideration by the Assembly in order to diminish the occurrence of such vacancies and, when necessary, to expedite filling them?

Ultimately, of course, this is a matter for the Assembly alone to decide. For the Court it is important that new judges be available to serve immediately upon being sworn in. Yet those elected are professionals of the highest calibre who understandably have many commitments at the time of their election. One way to address this challenge could be simply to move forward the elections. This would leave more time for those elected to wrap-up all of their outstanding professional commitments before being sworn in, and make it much more likely that they could take up their duties at the ICC immediately.

Another potential idea that States may wish to consider would be to develop a roster of elected judges beyond those needed for immediate openings. If feasible, this would mean that as unexpected vacancies occur, offers could be made to judges at the top of the roster without need for holding a new election. This would save States the substantial cost of holding unscheduled elections. It would also help the Court to minimize the judicial inefficiencies that arise when there are extended vacancies.

Bearing in mind that the Rome Statute foresees a nine-year term of office for judges, is there scope for possible age limits, as in the case of the European Court of Human Rights and some national systems?

Regardless of age, it is crucial that those elected are fit to serve in a job that comes with a heavy workload.

The Rome Statute foresees, insofar as their background is concerned, two categories of judges: List A and list B. How has each category contributed to the Court these past six years?

It is imperative that the Court have professionals who are familiar with procedural and substantive law. Likewise, we need colleagues with expertise in public international law, who are on top of developing jurisprudence in the field. Their perspectives add insight that greatly enriches our decisions.

Governance

Article 38, paragraph 3 (a), of the Rome Statute entrusts the President, with responsibility for the proper administration of the Court, with the exception of the Office of Prosecutor, while paragraph 4 calls for coordination with the Prosecutor on matters of mutual concern. The most recent Report of the Committee on Budget and Finance refers to some risks ensuing from the governance structure of the Court. Can you tell us about the Court's Coordination Council and how effective it has been in addressing those issues?

The Coordination Council, consisting of the President, Prosecutor and Registrar, meets once a month in sessions attended by the Secretariat of the ASP to discuss such matters of mutual interest as staffing, the budget, and the strategic plan. Various staff members attend to address issues within their expertise that are under current discussion. It is a useful body for the exchange of information and coordination of actions in many areas. Of course, the organs may differ on specific issues. This is inherent in the Court's governing structure, and is an inevitable consequence of the independence of the judiciary and that of the Prosecutor. The Coordination Council itself identified this risk in 2006 as something to be aware of and to address. At the outset, some argued that the OTP should have an entirely separate administration precisely to avoid conflicts. However, in the interests of efficiency, it was deemed that the OTP should rely on common services from the Registry. This requires close coordination, and frank open communication. Roles and mandates are not always clear, but operationally the different organs work well together in practice. Our role as the Coordination Council is to ensure the framework is in place and well-enough understood for our staff to go about their business. The CBF has requested a report from the Presidency on efforts to achieve clarity on the responsibilities of the organs and a common understanding between them. I will continue efforts in this area and report in April.

Role of the Presidency

Can you explain the means by which the Court as a whole and the Presidency in particular coordinates and contributes to outreach objectives? Are some judges assigned to undertake such as role on the basis of language, region and specialization?

I view outreach in the situation countries as a core element of this Court's work. If justice is not seen to be done in the communities most affected by our judicial activities, then our efforts lose much of their

meaning. The Public Information and Documentation Section (PIDS) of the Registry is in charge of outreach. Working through field offices and staff in The Hague, PIDS maintains two-way communication with affected societies. I am always willing to assist in any way possible. For example, recently I answered questions on video posed by participants in an outreach event in the DRC. The video with my answers, part of the outreach programme's "Ask the Court" series, was then later screened in those same communities.

The term "outreach" is sometimes understood in a broader sense to describe all interactions by Court officials to increase understanding of the ICC's mandate and activities. In this sense, the Presidency has been very engaged. Vice Presidents Diarra, Kaul and I have travelled to many countries, meeting with senior officials, speaking at events, and giving media interviews. However, the Presidency receives more invitations than can be accommodated. Some of these are passed to other judges, who then can represent the Court when their judicial schedules allow. The language of a country or specific event may dictate which judge is asked to attend.

What are the key outcomes of the trip to Africa you undertook earlier this year?

In June I travelled to the United Republic of Tanzania, South Africa, Lesotho and Botswana. In the United Republic of Tanzania, Lesotho and Botswana I had meetings with senior officials including Heads of State/Government, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Justice, and Attorneys General. My visit to each country was very much appreciated and I was warmly received, with all courtesies extended.

These meetings provided valuable opportunities to thank States for their support of the Court and listen to their views. It also gave me a chance to provide an update on the Court's activities. In meetings I emphasized the Court's judicial nature and the need for it



President Song presents the report of the ICC to the United Nations General Assembly on 29 October 2009

© UN Photo / Evan Schneider

National teller : Interview with Ms. Glenna Cabello de Daboin



Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations

This is the second time that you have taken part in the election of judges as a national teller. How would you compare these latest elections with the previous ones, where six judges were elected?

Although only two judges were elected on this occasion, the process was a long one and the results were eagerly awaited, just as with the last elections in New York.

This is the first time the elections have been held in The Hague. Do you see any difference, in terms of the substance or of form, in these elections, compared to those held at United Nations Headquarters?

I didn't notice any overall differences as to the substance or form of the elections; both were held in accordance with established guidelines, and no one would question the results.

The balloting for the vacancy assigned to the GRULAC region ended with votes being dispersed among the four candidates from the region. Do you believe that in future

this situation could be avoided by having fewer candidates put forward?

It depends on how you look at the situation. Admittedly, it could be said that it would be preferable to nominate fewer candidates in cases where the election is for just one judge for the region, so that the integrity of that region is not called into question. Fortunately, this did not happen and, despite everything, once it became sufficiently clear who was likely to win, the balance swung in that direction. However, at the same time, and I think that this how the region views it, the number of candidates reflects the commitment of the States Parties of the GRULAC region to the International Criminal Court and to the Rome Statute, and, as representative of the region, I found that situation satisfactory.

What do you think of the fact that the majority of judges are women?

Without taking a feminist position on this issue, I am very pleased that women are beginning to hold such high ranking and important offices. And I wish them all much success in their duties. In some countries, gender equality is State policy; and in many the government is in the hands of women, including the Presidency of the Republic.

Are female delegates following Court issues at the United Nations particularly sensitive to gender issues?

Actually I do not believe that female delegates are more interested in gender issues, but I can assure you that each of the delegates following the International Criminal Court at the United Nations does so with much pride and dedication, as we know and understand how important the

Court is for international peace and justice.

Generally speaking, how complicated is it to participate in meetings and parallel events at an Assembly session in The Hague, as opposed to in New York?

The session in The Hague was not complicated, but exhausting. The difference between the two sessions lies without any doubt in the number of meetings and parallel sessions, which makes the session in The Hague more rewarding. I hope that we will enjoy the same dynamic next year, at the ninth session of the Assembly of States Parties in New York.

In The Hague, the Assembly works on Saturday too, but were you still able to get to visit the town and the Netherlands?

Yes, on the Sunday I was able to go to Amsterdam, and I visited the van Gogh museum, and over and above fully enjoying this great painter's exhibition, I was pleasantly surprised because an exhibition was also being held of the Belgian painter Alfred Stevens, whom I consider one of my favourites. I was also able to make a boat trip through the canals, filled not only with wonderful sights but also with plenty of history.

Do you have any stories you would like to share with us?

Well, had the Assembly lasted a few more days, I would have been fit to compete in any hurdling event. My delegation was seated in the middle of the row, and to get out without disturbing the other delegations you had to jump over the seats. At first only the men did so, but the female delegates in that row ended up doing the same too.

National tellers

The election of the judges is by secret ballot, under the responsibility of the President of the Assembly, with the assistance of five national tellers (see ASP Newsletter #1).



From left:
Mr. Draganco Apostolovski
(The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
Ms. Glenda Cabello de Daboin
(Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela)
Mr. Herman Benjamin Van Heerden (South Africa)
Mr. Fabio Rossi (Netherlands)
Mr. Akram Harahsheh (Jordan), national tellers, and
Ms. Gabrijela Filipović, Secretariat teller.

Preparations for the tenth session of the Assembly

Preparations for the tenth session of the Assembly

Election of six judges

At its tenth session, in December 2011, the Assembly will elect six judges of the ICC. Nominations of candidates may be made by any State Party. The nomination period shall run from 13 June to 2 September 2011. Nominations shall be communicated through the diplomatic channel to the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties.

The total number of judges at the ICC is 18; the judges are elected for a term of nine years with a three-year election cycle. ICC judicial elections are subject to minimum voting requirements in order to ensure that the composition of the judges is adequately representative in the areas of legal competence and expertise, regional representation and gender.

Minimum voting requirements applicable for the elections at the tenth session

Lists

List A *: 3 List B *: 0 (The remaining three seats can be allocated to list A or list B candidates.)

Regional distribution

African States: 0

Asian States: 0

Eastern European States: 1

Latin American and Caribbean States: 2

Western European and other States: 0 (The remaining three seats can be allocated to any of the five regional groups.)

Gender

Male: 2 Female: 0 (The remaining four seats can be allocated to male or female candidates.)

* List A judges have established competence in criminal law and procedure, and the necessary relevant experience, whether as judge, prosecutor, advocate or in other similar capacity, in criminal proceedings.

List B judges have established competence in relevant areas of international law such as international humanitarian law and the law of human rights, and extensive experience in a professional legal capacity which is of relevance to the judicial work of the Court.