

Review Conference of the Rome Statute of the
International Criminal Court

Statement on behalf of

ESTONIA

by

H.E. Tiina Intelmann

Permanent Representative of Estonia to the
United Nations

Kampala, 1 June 2010

- Check against delivery-

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Estonia fully aligns itself with the statement made by the Spanish Presidency on behalf of the European Union.

This Review Conference is a historical milestone in the development of the international criminal justice system established under the Rome Statute. We are very grateful to the Government of Uganda for hosting such an outstanding event.

The Conference is an exceptional opportunity to assess the achievements made so far. In 1998 Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General of the United Nations, named the establishment of the International Criminal Court as “a giant step forward in the march towards the rule of law”. We are pleased to note that by now the Court has become an important actor in international relations. Estonia expresses its deep gratitude to all those involved in ensuring the Court’s position in international criminal justice. Let me avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate the firm and unwavering support of Estonia for the International Criminal Court. Universal adherence to the Rome Statute is a cornerstone of the Court. Thus we welcome the recent ratification of the Statute by Bangladesh.

This Conference also offers an arena for reaffirming the key principles on which the investigation and prosecution of the most serious crimes are based. In this context Estonia acknowledges the importance of the stocktaking exercise and welcomes the discussion on the issue of complementarity of the Rome Statute system.

We want to emphasize once more the importance of the principle that each individual State has the primary responsibility to protect its population from the gravest international crimes and put an end to the impunity of the perpetrators of such crimes. Pursuit of this principle is possible only if the state has the necessary legislative and institutional capability to investigate and prosecute such crimes. We also recall the commitment States took on the 5th Assembly of States Parties that the ratification of the Rome Statute has to be followed by implementing legislation. The adoption of implementing legislation has to be treated as a priority.

I am happy to say that Estonia has integrated all crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court into our criminal code. Estonia has also fully implemented the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute to our criminal procedural law in order to ensure judicial cooperation, if necessary, with the Court. We therefore encourage all State Parties to show their commitment to the Court with the implementation of the Rome Statute in their national legislation in a timely manner. Estonia is ready to share its expertise in this regard.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Review Conference provides a historic opportunity to conclude our long-time work on crime of aggression. We have to bear in mind that this crime is one of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Its wounds are deep and long-lasting. We strongly believe that the inclusion of the crime of aggression in the Court's jurisdiction will be an important step in promoting peace through rule of law. We are greatly assisted hereby by the solid work of the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression. Now is a time to make the final effort to deliberate towards the broadest acceptable solution for crime of aggression. We owe it to the international community. We owe it to the generations of children, women and men who have suffered because of the war of aggression.

Thank you for your attention.