

Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to begin by expressing how I feel privileged to be today here among an array of distinguished individuals that are jointly committed to the cause that has led us to assemble here: the fight against impunity.

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For more than half a century since the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials, States have, most regretfully, largely failed to bring to justice those individuals responsible for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole. Thus, with the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the world began to fulfill the post-World War II promise of "never again."

The ICC remains the first permanent treaty - based international judicial body capable of bringing perpetrators of those crimes to justice and providing redress to victims when States are unable or unwilling to do so. It has a special role in confronting genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity and thereby to promote international peace and security. Its establishment represented a major stride for international criminal justice.

Supporting ratification of the Statute remains a cornerstone to making the ICC truly global and universal. I state this to underline the firm commitment of Slovakia to the Court within its role as facilitator for the Plan of Action for achieving universality and full implementation of the Rome Statute.

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Slovakia, being one of those States which have ratified and became State Party to the Rome Statute among the first, attaches great importance to the International Criminal Court as well as to the 2010 Review Conference itself.

Slovakia is deeply committed to the fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes and to ensure that perpetrators of those crimes are without exception brought to justice.

For that reason, we must strive to achieve universal acceptance of the Rome Statute, which would allow us to close any gaps that may exist between what we seek, the end of impunity, and the current political reality. If we do not achieve that, justice might be seen as inept or unjust at times. However, we cannot fail to remember the accomplishments of the Court thus far. In addition to providing support and seeking justice for victims, it continues to foster respect for the rule of law in general and international law in particular. We must all carry on this effort of strengthening international peace and justice in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

In accordance with universality we see that the regional distribution of 111 States Parties to the Statute remains mixed, with under-representation in different regions. There are still numerous countries which have yet to join the Rome Statute.

On the other hand, in addition to ratification, ensuring the proper implementation at the national level is vital. States should incorporate crimes into their national penal system precisely in order for the principle of complementarity to be effective.

However, in reality there are several political, legal and technical difficulties. We should therefore continue our activities towards identifying obstacles that hinder attaining universal adherence to the Statute as well the effective implementation at the national level, and the adequate means to overcome those obstacles. To put it simply - universality and implementation of the Rome Statute, full cooperation with the Court and respect for its decisions, remain essential.

That is also why we are supporting very strongly activities regarding the „stocktaking“ exercise and the four stocktaking topics under consideration here in Kampala as well as discussions on the crime of aggression and jurisdictional filter with aim to account those responsible for the most serious international crimes.

I believe that The Review conference constitutes a significant milestone for the ICC, not only because of the possible adoption of the amendments to the Rome Statute. In general, it provides a unique opportunity for States to reflect on the achievements of the Court and to reaffirm their commitments to combat impunity for the most serious atrocities. Universality and implementation of the Statute play an indispensable role in that regard. Both would therefore be reviewed within the framework of the stocktaking of international criminal justice. Slovakia also views the Review Conference as an occasion to demonstrate our unity and tangible commitment to the Rome Statute such as by making pledges.

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Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm convinced that our common efforts can not only help States to identify specific concerns and objectives in each of four areas of stocktaking exercise but also reach very positive and consensual outcomes of the Review Conference.

In conclusion, allow me to express my hope that this conference will contribute not only to broadening the support of the international community for the International Criminal Court and its Rome Statute, but also to address some of the most important issues of international criminal justice in general.

With such a distinguished audience, I have full confidence that this will be a most fruitful occasion.

Thank you for your attention.

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