



EMBASSY OF SWEDEN

The Hague

Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Hans Magnusson  
Ambassador to The Netherlands

International Criminal Court  
Seventh Session of the Assembly of State Parties  
General Debate

The Hague, 14 November 2008

Check against Delivery

Mr President,

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement made by the distinguished representative of France on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, let me join others in welcoming you as President of the Assembly. Following the great progress made under your capable guidance in the Special Working Group, I am confident that your able stewardship will advance our work as we approach the Review Conference.

Mr President,

This summer we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute. Although the Court is still young, tremendous progress have been made, which is a testimony to the hard work of its officials and staff. Sweden wish to commend, and thank them, for their dedicated efforts. In particular, I would like to take this opportunity to thank President Philippe Kirsch for his invaluable services to the establishment of the Court. I would also like to welcome Ms Silvana Arbia as the new Registrar of the Court. My delegation would also like to express gratitude to those NGO:s who on a daily basis help advance the interests of the Court and the objectives of the Rome Statute.

Although we should remind ourselves that the Court has only been operational for six years, and we should be realistic in our expectations, it does not take away from the importance of continuing our efforts of improving the Court. While we still are in an early phase in the Court's life, our ultimate goal must be to form a model international administration, with the correct tools and mechanisms to ensure this.

Besides our efforts here at the Assembly, the Review Conference, in 2010, will offer a good opportunity to take stock of the Court's achievements and also to consider ways to increase its effectiveness.

Mr President,

Sweden remains firmly committed to the Court and to the principles of the Rome Statute. Ending impunity and ensuring that perpetrators of serious international crimes are held accountable for their deeds are priorities for Sweden. The long term effects of the Court will be greater respect for international law, international criminal law, humanitarian law, human rights and the rule of law. In fact, that long term does not have to stretch that far into the future – many of these effects are already visible.

Sweden remains convinced that peace and justice are not conflicting goals. On the contrary, they are mutually reinforcing, as no sustainable peace can be achieved without accountability. For sure we can find examples of peace negotiations made more complex through the introduction of accountability. But it is hard to imagine successful peace agreements that fails to address justice. This is not a choice between peace or justice, and we should never permit it to be posed that way. It should rightly be a choice only as regards timing and method.