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**5<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES  
PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT, THE HAGUE  
23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER TO 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2006**

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GHANA**

**BY ROBERT TACHIE-MENSON**

**MINISTER, GHANA PERMANENT MISSION, NEW YORK**

**MR. PRESIDENT,  
EXCELLENCIES,  
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,**

First of all, let me on behalf of my delegation commend the President and Judges of the International Criminal Court, the Prosecutor and his staff, for their vision, tireless efforts and professionalism that have guided and shaped the Court in the its formative years.

Mr. President, the establishment of the ICC after years of painstaking negotiations, was not only landmark in the development of international humanitarian law, but also emphatically signaled the determination of the international community to end impunity for the most serious crimes.

Since its inception, the Court has made impressive strides in establishing itself as a vital organ for the dispensation of justice in the international system.

With the referral of the Darfur situation, preparation for trial in the Lubanga case of the Democratic Republic of Congo; and the issue of arrest warrants in connection with the situation in the Northern Uganda; it can be stated that the court has moved from the consolidation stage to a fully operational court.

In this connection, Ghana welcomes the cooperation agreement signed by the Court with the African Union and the European Union. These agreements are essential in enhancing the scope and impact of the Court activities.

However, it must be noted that this transition to the operational stage cannot be successful without the active support and cooperation of states parties. Since the Court has to rely on states to provide operational inputs such as arrests, logistics and detention facilities; it

is imperative that the states parties muster the necessary political will and provide the resources that will enable the Court to discharge its responsibilities fully. Lack of this cooperation and apathy could undermine the Court and at the same time send the wrong signal to the perpetrators of heinous crimes. It will also be a betrayal of the trust of the victims of these crimes who seek justice. The ICC can only be as strong and effective as we the state parties want it to be.

Mr. President, my delegation also wishes to express strong support for the outreach programme of the Court in some of the conflict areas of Africa. The logical extension of this outreach programme would be the trial of the perpetrators in the location of the crimes. While there may be practical difficulties in pursuing this objective, it is our hope that this idea can be implemented in the near future. The symbolism of bringing justice to the affected communities can have a powerful impact in healing the emotional scars inflicted by the atrocities. It is important that justice

should not be seen as a remote and abstract possibility by these battle scarred victims.

We also support efforts to strengthen the Trust Fund for Victims. The concept of compensation and reparation should be one of the pillars of justice. This should involve not only material support but also counselling and whatever measures necessary to facilitate the healing process. In this regard, the Court can play a critical role in the reconciliation and reconstruction processes in the conflict zones.

Finally, Mr. President, we wish to express Ghana's unwavering commitment to the Court and its ideals in the coming years.

Thank you.