

Statement by
H E Mr M Riaz Hamidullah
Ambassador of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Kingdom of the Netherlands
& the Permanent Representative to the ICC
at the 21st Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute

International Criminal Court (ICC), The Hague, 6 December 2022

Mr Vice - President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

My delegation's warm congratulations to Madam President and the Bureau. Our appreciation also to all the Principals of the Court - the Presidency, Office of the Prosecutor, the Registry and the Trust Fund for Victims - for their valued works. Our especial tribute to Registrar Peter Lewis for his exemplary service and dedication.

Mr Vice – President,

This July, ICC turned 21. Next year marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute. Bangladesh all along looks at the Court to stand as the most resolute legal institution in providing justice to the victims. As a manifestation of Bangladesh's commitment to global peace and justice, as early as in 1999, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina mooted the "Culture of Peace" resolution in the UNGA. In spite of all difficulties and constraints, Bangladesh maintains principled stand on international peace and justice.

In this regard, let me flag a particular aspect, Mr Vice - President.

Bangladesh withstood a gruesome genocide during our War of Liberation in 1971. Our history, sacrifice and endurance as a victim of genocide led us to open our borders to children - women - men from Northern Rakhine State in Myanmar in August 2017. Five years on, Bangladesh hosts 1.2 million Rohingya people.

Sadly enough, in a world of competing issues and complex geo-politics, the interest on a brutal atrocity in modern history looks declining. Long-standing presence of Rohingya people is destabilising society and economy in Bangladesh and even greater neighbourhood. While people in Bangladesh show empathy, there is a growing sense among our people that Bangladesh is

left alone to deal with the Stateless Rohingyas. Bangladesh has done far more than she could. Beyond humanitarian support, the Rohingyas foremost need political support. If the world is to ask for justice for the Rohingya people, all matters related to their identity – rights in Myanmar must be addressed to pave ways for sustainable return. In the midst the volatilities confronting international community, international justice mechanisms must not ignore the Rohingya people.

We commend the OTP for the progress made on the investigation. Also note the budgetary allocation made. Bangladesh is providing effective cooperation to the Court and the OTP on the investigation process. Completion of the investigation on the Case is crucial for the the Rohingya people, even beyond their safe – orderly – dignified return to their homeland, Myanmar. Bangladesh would urge all members of the Rome Statute to lend their support for justice and accountability for Rohingyas; and, on that score, I would like to invite all to join a Side Event this Friday morning.

In that context, we note the engagements of the Trust Fund for Victims towards the survivors. Bangladesh had made modest voluntary contribution to the Fund within her limits. State Parties need to make vigorous contribution to the Fund in providing reparative justice to the victims and survivors. We would particularly encourage TFV leadership to visit Bangladesh to see the conditions of the Rohingyas; and initiate assistance programme soonest.

Mr. Vice - President,

Let me underline certain aspects, on the Court's functioning.

Equitable geographic representation, particularly from the developing countries, is key to demonstrate the Court's true international character. The Registry may develop a mechanism to encourage potential candidates from developing countries for appointment as JPOs and Interns, which should help accomplish complementarity.

In our collective aim to secure the **universality of Rome Statute**, the Court may creatively engage with diverse stakeholders in the non-member states. Sustained engagements can gradually generate interest, convince people of the values of universal imperative of justice & accountability and

eventually address perceptions or misperceptions or apprehensions, whatever that may exist. We believe, this should be collective investment in our 'shared future'.

The Court had a most engaging year dealing with the highest number (~~17~~) of open situations and several active investigations ongoing. My delegation reiterates our confidence the leadership of Prosecutor Khan and the OTP. Listening to so many Ministers and delegations since yesterday, this Assembly needs to unequivocally lend its support with predictable resources in the Court's proposed **Budget**. We must move from the spectre of 'Zero Nominal Growth'; and factor in inflation in the increase in budget, steadily risen demand on the Court, the vision laid out by the Prosecutor and the imperative for the Court to firmly and timely deliver justice and accountability.

Bangladesh appreciates the work of the **Review Mechanism**; and applaud its Co-facilitators, Ambassador van den Ijssel and Ambassador Kanu, for their exemplary leadership. As an *ad country* focal point, Bangladesh was engaged throughout the process leading to the adoption of the Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP); and notes the progress made in the Plan's implementation. We hope, the Review Mechanism would continue to work in accordance with the mandate given.

Mr Vice - President:

My delegation recognizes the constructive works of the **CICC**. We view their works in bringing the Court - States Parties - civil society closer, thus contributing towards effective deliberations of the Court.

In closing, let me underscore that Bangladesh values ICC as a **living institution, of the future** – in rediscovering critical import of 'justice and accountability' in ensuring global peace and stability as also in establishing justice and rule-based global development as **global commons**. Let this be our collective quest to vindicate justice beyond borders.

I thank you.
