



JAPAN

Statement

by

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**At the Twenty-First Session of the Assembly of States Parties to
the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)**

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Mr. Vice President,

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute, the expectations of the international community for the ICC are greater than ever. Japan appreciates the leadership of the President, the Prosecutor and the Registrar in meeting these expectations. At the same time, there is unprecedented attention for the ICC within the world, so it is crucial that the Court gives true meaning to the One-Court principle.

Mr. Vice President,

In order to intensify the fight against impunity and make the ICC's activities sustainable, it is of paramount importance to promote the universality of the ICC. On this score, Japan applauds President Hofmański for his outreach initiatives.

During President Hofmański's recent meetings in Japan with Prime Minister Kishida, Foreign Minister Hayashi and others, Japan and the Court decided to jointly strive for wider membership in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will step up our efforts in this endeavor.

Mr. Vice President,

Japan welcomes the reorganization of the Office of the Prosecutor that has been underway since Prosecutor Khan took office, and is counting on his leadership to deliver on necessary reforms. Alongside the reorganization, the OTP deserves credit for addressing various situations appropriately, including the situation in Ukraine, which Japan referred to the Court.

Against this backdrop, Japan has not only dispatched legal practitioners to the OTP, with the cost borne by the Japanese side, but has been also paying a due consideration on the financial front. The initial proposed budget presented in July requested an unprecedented increase over the previous year. It is the basic position of Japan that the budget should have zero nominal growth. Japan has had massive constrains at home in recent years. And yet, Japan has seriously considered such a large budget hike in order to support the ICC's activities.

[As delivered]

I am confident that many other States Parties are confronted with such challenging situations. With this in mind, it is our hope that the OTP will produce tangible results, while fully recognizing that priority should be given to the selection of cases within a finite resource allocation.

Mr. Vice President,

In the Registry, reforms have made steady progress. This is notably reflected by the staff survey concerning work environment, in which the organ scored the highest in the Court was the Registry. The ICC in its entirety has overcome unprecedented challenges over the past few years. All these could not be achieved without the efforts of Registrar Lewis. Since this is Mr. Lewis' last ASP, I would like to mention his accomplishments and place them on record.

In the coming year, a new Registrar will be elected. While Japan respects the judges' decision, I would like to share Japan's views on the qualifications required of the next Registrar.

First is experience and competence in the management of international organizations as well as the ability to remain on top of discussions surrounding the IER recommendations, as the ICC continues to be in the middle of a comprehensive review.

Second is sufficient experience in crisis management, given that the Registrar plays a lead role in ensuring business continuity in times of serious crises affecting both operations at the seat of the Court, and in country offices.

Third is an understanding of the position of States Parties as donors and competence in eliciting their cooperation, which should not be taken for granted. Furthermore, in view of the present serious cash flow problems, the Registrar should be able to ensure early payment of assessed contributions from States Parties including those in arrears.

To sum up, the next Registrar should be someone who can evolve the Registry and continue improvement of work, "Kaizen" in Japanese, building on the foundation laid by Mr. Lewis.

[As delivered]

Last but not least, let me reaffirm Japan's continuous commitment to the Trust Fund for Victims. This year, coordination for a voluntary contribution to the TFV was made extremely difficult due to the budget surge. However, I am pleased to announce that Japan will make an additional contribution to the TFV next year.

Thank you.