

**21st Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the
International Criminal Court
General Debate
Statement by Mr. Yung-suh PARK
Chargé D'affaires a.i. of the Republic of Korea to the Kingdom of the
Netherlands**

(Greeting)

Madame President,

It is my distinct honor to join you in person at this year's Assembly of States Parties since the Covid-19 pandemic. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you as President of the Assembly, as well as to the team of the Bureau, the Working Groups, and the Secretariat of the Assembly for all the excellent work in preparing for this 21st Session.

My delegation also commends the joint efforts of the Presidency, the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor, and the Registry to help end impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. The Republic of Korea recognizes that the Court has made meaningful progress across its prosecutorial and judicial activities this year with a record number of five cases on trial and three new investigations opened in the Philippines, Venezuela, and Ukraine.

I am convinced that, with your accomplished leadership, you will guide this Session to a successful outcome.

(Reform of the ICC)

Madame President,

My delegation welcomes the continued efforts of the States Parties, the Court, and other stakeholders to actively engage in assessing and monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Expert Review, or IER, to strengthen the ICC and the Rome Statute system.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Review Mechanism, with its two State Party representatives and three ad-country focal points, for the very intensive work undertaken so far while always observing the principle of transparency and inclusivity in the exercise of its mandate.

As the assessment phase nears completion and the Review Mechanism's mandate may come to a formal end next year, the key question is what comes next to consolidate our progress and continue to further improve.

In this regard, my delegation looks forward to the commemorative event for the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute, to be held at the UN headquarters in July 2023, where we will take stock of what has been accomplished and identify the way forward after the conclusion of the Review Mechanism. My delegation reconfirms its strong commitment to continued and full engagement for the implementation of the IER recommendations.

(Election of Judges)

Madame President,

My delegation believes States Parties should elect the best possible judges on the basis of merit and experience, in accordance with the Rome Statute, at next year's Assembly to ensure the Court will be able to meet its current and future challenges.

The Republic of Korea is pleased to have announced the candidacy of Mr. Keebong Paek for election as a judge of the Court. Mr. Paek has established competence in criminal law and procedure, and over thirty years of experience, both as a prosecutor and attorney, in criminal proceedings. He is a person of high moral character, impartiality, and integrity, who meets the qualifications required to be a Judge in the Rome Statute and for appointment to the highest judicial offices in the Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea looks forward to introducing him to as many of you as possible, both here at the Assembly and over the coming months.

(Promotion of Universality)

Madame President,

The Republic of Korea believes the wider participation of States in the Rome Statute will undoubtedly lead to stronger support for the Court by reinforcing the independent system of international criminal justice to fight impunity and prevent the gravest crimes under international law.

In this regard, through the universality working group, the Republic of Korea, together with the Netherlands, has actively contributed to the efforts to promote, as far as possible, the universality and full implementation of the Rome Statute

by reaching out to non-States Parties and encouraging their ratification of the Rome Statute.

In May 2022, the co-focal points, together with the ICC and civil society organizations, hosted a high-level seminar in Brussels, aimed at States that are not party to the Statute and that have embassies in Brussels. In July 2022, the Republic of Korea, organized a luncheon meeting in Seoul to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute. The Republic of Korea will continue to strengthen these efforts, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

(Under-representation in Recruitment)

Madame President,

Equitable geographical distribution benefits the Court by ensuring a diversity of perspective which, internally, increases creativity in the work environment and, externally, remains crucial to address perception challenges and advance the universality of the Rome Statute.

The Republic of Korea notes with concern that there has been a persistent and chronic imbalance of geographical representation in the recruitment of ICC staff, to the detriment of certain countries and regions, particularly the Asia-Pacific region. We recognize the various actions taken by the Registry to address this situation, such as the participation of Human Resources staff in all stages of the recruitment process to ensure the consideration of diversity and geographical representation.

However, we call upon the Court and Assembly to redouble their efforts to pay more attention to the issue of under-representation and to rectify the geographical imbalance at the earliest possible time.

(Liquidity Shortfall)

Madame President,

The Republic of Korea takes note of the Budget and Finance Committee's repeated concerns with liquidity issues, one of the greatest challenges the Court is facing. In order for the Court to fulfil its important mandate under the Rome Statute, we strongly encourage all States Parties to make timely payments of their assessed contributions in full, according to their obligations under the Rome Statute.

(Trust Fund for Victims)

Madame President,

My delegation highly values the role of the Trust Fund for Victims. I believe that the Fund has an important mandate to deliver restorative justice to victims and affected communities. In contributing to this initiative, the Republic of Korea has been making annual voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Victims since 2010 and will continue to do so.

(Closing Remarks)

Madame President,

This Assembly marks a defining moment for the ICC. With the full support for the Court by all States Parties, the ICC will be able to carry out its important mandate of ensuring justice for the victims of the most serious crimes. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its deep commitment to and staunch support for the activities of the ICC.

I would like to bring my remarks to a close by once again expressing my sincere gratitude to you, Madame President, for the preparations for this Assembly. I look forward to meaningful and productive discussions on all these important matters.

Thank you.