



Twenty-first Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the International Criminal Court

**Statement by
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of the Republic of Latvia**

Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the Assembly, the President of the Court, the Prosecutor and the Deputy Prosecutors elected during the last session of the Assembly and express my appreciation on the important work during the last year. As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Rome Statute I would like to reaffirm Latvia's unwavering support for the International Criminal Court to ensure international criminal justice.

Madam President,

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and would like to highlight the following in its national capacity.

Latvia highly values the international legal order that guarantees international peace and security, and acknowledges the importance of the international criminal law to fight impunity. Being State Party to the Rome Statute for more than twenty years, we continue to strongly believe in international criminal justice. It is significant to remember that it cannot be maintained by the Court alone, but also requires strong support from the State Parties.

War crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crime of aggression are the gravest crimes recognized by international society, and impunity for the commission of such crimes is unacceptable. Therefore, accountability for such crimes is the prerequisite for international justice.

Currently we all are witnessing the most serious crimes of international concern taking place in Ukraine, whose unimaginable consequences horrify international community. Investigation opened by the Prosecutor regarding alleged atrocity crimes in Ukraine proves the Court's commitment to ensure rules-based international order. Regrettably, the Court is unable to exercise jurisdiction over the crime of aggression committed against Ukraine. To prevent impunity, this accountability gap must be closed, and we believe that an ad hoc special tribunal would be the most appropriate tool to complement the jurisdiction of the Court.

Madam President,

It must be outlined that for the proper and efficient functioning of the International Criminal Court, regular allocation of appropriate resources from all of the State Parties is essential. In order for the Court to fulfil its objectives, we encourage State Parties to continue to provide necessary financial resources and to pay their annual contributions.

Acknowledging the importance of the work done by the Court, Latvia has provided financial support as well as sent experts to assist in the ongoing investigations. Further, Latvia is honoured to work side by side with the Court in Joint Investigation Team, which seeks to enhance judicial cooperation among the competent authorities involved in the investigation and prosecution of core international crimes perpetrated in Ukraine.

Recalling that the work of the Court is complementary to the national justice systems, Latvian competent institutions have initiated criminal investigations based on universal jurisdiction to prosecute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Latvia firmly believes that investigations in national capacity may strengthen the Court's effort to ensure accountability.

Madam President,

The international community has a shared responsibility to maintain justice and to prevent impunity. On that account Latvia encourages all the member states to continue to strengthen the Rome Statute system and calls upon non-member states to ratify the Rome Statute and its Kampala Amendments on the crime of aggression.

Thank you.