



STATEMENT BY

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THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

OF THE

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

AT THE

TWENTY- FIRST SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES  
PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022

THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS

(Check against delivery)

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The President of the Assembly of States Parties

Heads of Delegations and Representatives of States Parties

Judges of the International Criminal Court

The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

Officers of the International Criminal Court

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen

Madam President,

On behalf of my country, I take this opportunity to salute you for the excellent manner in which you have steered the business of this Assembly since your election, and to assure you of my country's continued support and cooperation during this session and beyond.

I also take the opportunity to congratulate Mr Peter Lewis on completing a successive term as Registrar of the International Criminal Court as he enters the home stretch of what has been a remarkable tenure. As a country, we are cognizant of the contributions that Mr. Lewis has made and are keen to ensure that his achievements are sustained.

In this regard, Madam President, Uganda has fielded a highly competent, efficient and experienced female candidate, who we are confident will build on Mr Lewis' legacy, especially by reinforcing bridging the gender and geographical diversity gaps in the recruitment of senior staff at the Court, taking justice closer to the affected communities and building partnerships with states parties, civil society and all stakeholders. I believe that every State Party will agree with me that the time to end the twenty years reign of one geographical region holding the Office of Registrar is ripe. A Registrar who is familiar and has experience of working with the geographical region where all cases before the Court are based is what the Court needs; it is time for an African Registrar.

Madam President

Allow me to reiterate to this Assembly Uganda's unwavering commitment to the fight against impunity within her borders, and beyond. As we have previously done, we wish to remind this Assembly that Uganda was the first State in January 2004 to make a referral to the International Criminal Court following the coming into existence of the Court less than 2 years before, in 2002. Uganda has continued to contribute to the work of the Court, when called upon and we will continue to do more than meet our statutory obligations in every way possible.

Madam President,

In keeping with the promise to keep victims at the core of the Court's mandate, Uganda hosted the second monitoring visit to Northern Uganda last October. We are grateful for the initiative taken by the Irish Government to organise this visit to Uganda and for the support to the governments of Belgium, Estonia Liechtenstein, New Zealand and the Trust Fund for Victims.

They facilitated this important mission that enabled the exploration of how assistance is rendered to the victims and made recommendations on lessons learned from the Northern Uganda experience, which we hope we will have the opportunity to deliberate upon at the side event this Tuesday. This last monitoring visit attracted not only States Parties but also observers from non-States parties who we believe are keen to work with us to ensure justice for victims of Rome Statute Crimes.

Uganda welcomes the recent request from the Prosecutor to hold a hearing on confirmation of charges against Joseph Kony, the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army in his absence. If granted, this long overdue opportunity will kick start advancing the course of justice for the thousands of victims who have waited for three decades to see this happen, it is a little glimmer of hope.

Uganda will, as we have done for the last two decades, work closely with the Court in performing its mandate both within the country and elsewhere on the African continent. We hope to remain a reliable committed partner of the Court in the pursuit of its mandate.

Madam President,

We welcome the setting of the date for the delivery of the appeal judgment in the Mr. Dominic Ongwen, matter on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022. It is our hope that the historic trial judgment will be affirmed so that the victims can move on to the reparations phase. We appeal to States Parties to consider increasing resources to support the work of the Trust Fund for Victims so that we can make justice achievable and meaningful.

Madam President,

International justice is costly. As States Parties, we are continually asking more of the Court without matching these demands with a commensurate growth in the budget. We call upon this Assembly to commit to the Court's global mandate by providing the Court with financial, political and practical support.

No victims of Rome Statute Crimes should be left feeling secondary to others and this should be reflected in the way that we respond to all catastrophic situations as long as our mandate permits the Court's intervention.

Uganda will continue to work towards strengthening partnerships with States Parties, Civil Society and the appropriate offices of the Court and the Rome Statute mechanisms that spearhead work with victims and witnesses.

Madam President

My government reiterates its support for the Independent Expert Review (IER) report and looks forward to reflecting on the progress made on implementing the recommendations especially those recommendations that required “drastic action” such as addressing gender parity and geographical diversity gaps in high level positions, improving the efficiency of the court and dealing with predatory behavior at the Court. The disproportionate representation in high-level positions from other regions but Africa is of major concern to us. The statistics received this November indicate that there is no female at the director level and likewise no African at that level. This concern should be addressed promptly.

Madam President,

Allow me to conclude by reiterating my country's keenness on a continued close relationship with the Court and by wishing everyone here great deliberations over the next 5 days.

I thank you.

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