

Diplomatic Briefing

The Hague, 8 November 2010

Statement by the Director of the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties, Mr. Renan Villacis

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to address you in order to convey some of the most recent developments concerning the Assembly, particularly as the Court and its Assembly are going to embark upon a period of substantial changes.

Tenth session of the Assembly

The tenth session of the Assembly shall be held at UNHQ from 12 to 21 December 2011 and would be presided by Ambassador Tiina Intelmann (Estonia), who we are honoured to have with us today. Amb. Intelmann will begin her three year term along with a new Bureau on 12 December.

The exact composition of the Bureau is still pending an agreement of three regional groups who have to indicate who would represent them. The two Vice-Presidents and Rapporteur would be chosen from the Bureau members.

There is also a need for nine States to indicate their willingness to be part of the Credentials Committee, which would in principle also be renewed.

The Bureau has approved a provisional work programme, which was emailed to all States in July; it would be updated in the coming weeks, once the Hague Working Group and New York Working Group, as well as the Oversight Committee on permanent premises submit their respective reports and the Bureau can then see how to re-allocate the time.

In principle, the first two days would be devoted to the annual statements, followed by the election of the Prosecutor, of six members of the Committee on Budget and Finance and of six judges.

For the opening meeting on 12 December, there would be a special address by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, as well as an address by H.E. Mr. Ian Khama the President of Botswana.

As regards the election of the Prosecutor, the Search Committee for the position of Prosecutor submitted its report to the Bureau on 25 October, which contained the names of four persons. President Wenaweser is organizing meeting of the four short-listed persons in New York seeking to find an agreement on a consensus candidate before the end of November. This would thus allow the person to be the only formal nominee and for the election on 12 December to be expeditious.

As regards the nomination for six judges, the balloting process may take several rounds, which is why the afternoon of 12 Dec. and all of 13 Dec. is foreseen for that purpose. Information on the nominations is available on the website of the Court. We wish to recall that although the six new judges would have their solemn undertaking as of 11 March, it is not likely that all of them would be called for full time duty in The Hague until later in the year.

The speakers list for the general debate opened on 7 November. Requests should be submitted via email to the Secretariat with an indication of the name and position of the speaker, as ministerial level representatives will be accorded a preferential slot. As of this morning [9] States have inscribed themselves for the general debate.

An advance version of the Journal containing the official programme of work and the side-events foreseen will be disseminated electronically towards the end of next week. If any events have not been conveyed to the Secretariat yet, please let us know as soon as possible.

The omnibus resolution will be chaired by Mr. Zenon Mukongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo), who will hold informal consultations in New York in the coming days, based on the draft paragraphs that would be conveyed to him from The Hague and New York Working Groups on different topics.

Arrears

We note that there are ten States Parties currently in arrears and that they would thus not be able to vote in the Bureau nor in the Assembly unless the requisite minimum payments are made by 10 December.

Credentials and registration

On 7 February and 7 November 2011, States Parties were requested to convey their credentials before 9 December 2011 to the Secretariat of the Assembly.

Assembly related developments

Permanent premises of the Court

The project has entered the final design phase. In the coming weeks, expressions of interest for the general contract will be requested, with a tender procedure to take place between November 2011 and August 2012. The general contract would be awarded at the end of August 2012 with construction commencing on September 2012. In accordance with the planning, the Court would move into the new premises in December 2015.

Visits of the President

President Wenaweser organized a retreat in Liechtenstein from 16 to 18 October that focused on the future of the ICC. He then visited the seat of the Court from 19 to 21 October where he met Court officials and several delegates that facilitate different topics for the Assembly. The President also attended a seminar on the governance issues organized by the United Kingdom on issues related to the Study Group on Governance.

The report of the retreat and the seminar would be disseminated in the coming days; they contain a wealthy assortment of ideas on how the Rome Statute system and in particular its Assembly, can face the challenges of its second decade.

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