



**Judge Sang-Hyun Song**  
**President of the International Criminal Court**

*Remarks at Welcoming Ceremony for Grenada,  
the 115<sup>th</sup> State Party to the Rome Statute*

*The Hague, Netherlands  
23 August 2011*

Your Excellency, Ambassador Stephen Fletcher,

It is an honour for me to open this welcoming ceremony to celebrate Grenada becoming the 115<sup>h</sup> State Party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. I wish to extend to you a very warm welcome on behalf of the entire Court.

I am glad to be joined today by several of my fellow judges: Judge Kuenyehia of Ghana, Judge Kourula of Finland, Judge Trendafilova of Bulgaria, Judge Nsereko of Uganda and Judge Fernández of Argentina.

With us are also the Vice-President of the Assembly of State Parties, His Excellency Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco; the Deputy Prosecutor of the ICC, Madame Fatou Bensouda on behalf of the Prosecutor, Mr. Luis Moreno-Ocampo; and the Registrar, Ms. Silvana Arbia.

Your Excellency,

By acceding to the Rome Statute, Grenada has joined the growing community of nations committed to ending impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to humanity. Each State that joins the ICC sends out a powerful message that it does not tolerate genocide, crimes against humanity or the other atrocious offences listed in the Statute, and it will not provide refuge to those suspected of such crimes.

I find this to be a logical step by Grenada, which is already party to the Genocide Convention, the four Geneva Conventions and the first and second additional protocols, and whose constitution attaches great importance to the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

With its accession to the Rome Statute, Grenada continues a proud Caribbean tradition of supporting the International Criminal Court. It was a particular pleasure for me to learn about Grenada's accession in your region, while I was attending the CARICOM seminar on the ICC in Port-of-Spain in May this year.

Since the early negotiations that led to the creation of the ICC, Caribbean states have been important advocates for international justice. 12 members of the Caribbean Community have now become States Parties to the Rome Statute and I hope that Grenada's example will inspire the last three CARICOM members remaining outside the ICC to join us soon.

Your Excellency,

The nation of Grenada has seen its share of injustice, human suffering and conflict, and I am certain that this historical experience only strengthens your country's ability to make an important contribution to the further development of international criminal justice. Grenada now has an equal right with every other State Party to take part in future discussions concerning amendments to the Rome Statute or any other matter to be decided by the Assembly of States Parties.

Let me stress that accession to the Rome Statute marks only the beginning of a country's active participation in the ICC system. One of the most important next steps is to create the domestic legal framework necessary to cooperate fully with the ICC and to enable domestic prosecution of Rome Statute offences, further solidifying your commitment to the victims of these crimes, and to justice as an integral part of peace.

Furthermore, I encourage Grenada to ratify the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities, and to consider extending various forms of voluntary support to the ICC, for instance by way of concluding an agreement on witness protection.

Your Excellency,

By joining the ICC, Grenada has taken the world one step closer to achieving universal adoption of the Rome Statute. The offences listed in the Rome Statute are crimes of international concern, and it is only together that we can come closer to ending the terrible suffering that such atrocities continue to cause, particularly when committed with impunity.

Let me conclude by saying that I heartily agree with Grenada's Prime Minister, the Honourable Tillman Thomas, who said that Grenada's accession to the Rome Statute demonstrates that your country "stands with the international community in the protection of human rights, respect for the individual and the promotion of the rule of law."

I congratulate the nation of Grenada on its decision to join the Rome Statute and I warmly welcome your country to the International Criminal Court.

I will now give the floor to the Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties, Ambassador Jorge Lomónaco.