



Ceremony for the Solemn Undertaking

Courtroom I, International Criminal Court

20 January, 2010

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

Excellencies

Today we are gathered at the heart of a fully functioning judicial institution. In this courtroom, the once nascent concept of individual responsibility for international crimes is made manifest: the Prosecution and the Defence present their evidence; witnesses and victims tell their stories.

It has been an active 12 months for the International Criminal Court. Two trials have commenced and a third is being prepared. The Court has witnessed its first voluntary appearance of a suspect pursuant to a summons to appear, as well as the issuance of a warrant of arrest against a Head of State. Judges are issuing decisions on fundamental aspects of the Rome Statute, such as the principle of complementarity and the rights of the accused. The Prosecutor has signaled his intention to proceed with an investigation into the Republic of Kenya.

During its eighth session, the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute elected two judges to the Court, Judge Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi and Judge Kuniko Ozaki.

Pursuant to article 45 of the Rome Statute of the Court, before taking up their duties, judges must make, in open court, a solemn undertaking to exercise their functions impartially and conscientiously.

This morning, the two elected judges will make their solemn undertakings here in this courtroom.

The Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties will witness the making of the solemn undertakings.

The undertakings of judges are of concern to the entire Court. As such, the Prosecutor, the Deputy Prosecutor, the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar are in attendance.

Before the solemn undertakings, I invite the Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to report on the election of the judges.

Thank you, Excellency.

We will now proceed with the solemn undertakings. I invite the Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties to oversee the solemn undertakings and I kindly ask the Registrar to assist him.

The solemn undertakings of two judges of the International Criminal Court have hereby been concluded in accordance with article 45 of the Statute.

The two judges will be assigned to divisions during the plenary session of the judges which will be held this afternoon.

The ceremony is hereby adjourned.