

# **SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES**

## **Tenth Session of the Assembly**

**New York, 12 – 21 December 2011**

### **Remarks by Amb. Intelmann, the new President of the Assembly upon election**

I would like to thank States Parties for entrusting me with this important position; I feel extremely privileged to serve as the President of the Assembly for the next three years.

While preparing to take over these responsibilities, it has been humbling to learn and experience how much dedication and energy is being put into building and strengthening this institution by the people sitting at this podium, in this room as well as by members of civil society and academics. The ICC has a lot of supporters. Over the past 10 years I have observed and admired the dedication of my three predecessors: Ambassador Wenaweser of Liechtenstein, Foreign Minister Bruno Stano Ugarte of Costa Rica and Ambassador Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan. My special thanks go to Ambassador Wenaweser under whose leadership this session has been prepared.

This session will bring a number of changes to the Court. Later today, the Assembly will elect a new Prosecutor and six new judges. I am confident that the newcomers will come on board with the same dedication as those who came before them and that all those relinquishing their positions will remain active supporters in our common goal – the fight against impunity.

Ten years after its inception, the ICC has taken up an important place in the international system and its creation is widely viewed as one of the most important decisions the international community has taken. Our family of States Parties is growing steadily and we have recently reached 120. I am quite confident that during my tenure we will reach and surpass the two-thirds majority of UN membership. But the ultimate goal will always remain to achieve universal acceptance of the Rome Statute.

Against all odds, the historic amendments to the Rome Statute on the Crime of Aggression adopted in Kampala, by consensus.

The Court is now seized of 14 cases in seven situations. One former Head of State is awaiting trial in the Hague. A few months ago, the United Nations Security Council unanimously referred a situation to the ICC. In a show of confidence, several States have referred the situations in their own countries to the Court, and the Prosecutor used his *proprio motu* powers to begin investigations. The Court is receiving communications from people seeking justice all over the world.

However, looking ahead, we cannot take the Rome Statute system for granted. An important component of it is the responsibility of States to live up to their commitment to be able to prosecute Rome Statute crimes in their national courts. The ICC can only address the tip of the iceberg. For the sake of victims, their families and affected communities there must be no impunity for the worst crimes under international law. States Parties should increase their focus on building capacities of national jurisdictions. This is also the only way to deter future crimes.

Over the next three years we have to look how we can assist the Court to cope with its increasing workload by making appropriate changes that are within the competence of the Assembly. We should also provide the Court with means to carry out its work, with broad political support and with everyday cooperation, in line with the commitments taken when joining the Rome Statute.

The Assembly will also have to take a look at lessons learned from this year's and previous elections, find new ways of interacting with world's development actors, and to continue work to support victims of crimes. There are many tasks ahead. I hope that I will be able to rely on continued support of States Parties during my tenure.

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