



SLOVENIA

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**STATEMENT
BY**

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Madame President, Distinguished Members of the Court and Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to address the Assembly on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia. We align ourselves with the statement made by Poland on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset allow me to congratulate you Madam President for the election as a new President of the Assembly of States Parties and also to the new members of the Bureau. On this occasion we would like to pay tribute to Ambassador Christian Wenaweser, the former President of this Assembly, and to H.R.H. Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein, the Coordinator of the Search Committee, for their outstanding, professional and hard work.

With the aim to preserve the respect, authority and integrity of the Court, Slovenia always underlined that only the most professional and competent candidates should be selected for the position of judges and the prosecutor of the Court. We are convinced that by this year's elections we have succeeded in reaching this goal. We wish to express our gratitude to the outgoing Judges and the Prosecutor H.E. Luis Moreno-Ocampo for their devoted work and sincerely congratulate the newly elected Judges and the new Prosecutor Ms. Fatou Bensouda. We wish them all the best in fulfilling their important mandates.

Slovenia was and remains a firm supporter of an independent, effective and efficient International Criminal Court. The adoption of the Rome Statute was a historic event, which confirmed our common goal to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of the most severe crimes known to humanity. It is the mission of the Court to make this ideal a reality. But this can be accomplished only by united support and full cooperation of the whole international community and by establishing complete **universality** of the Rome Statute. We therefore welcome six new States parties that ratified the Rome Statute in 2011 and hope that efforts to achieve the widest possible participation will continue.

Since genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other most horrendous crimes, represent a serious threat to the international legal order, peace and security, all national, as well as supranational measures enshrined in treaties, customs and general principles of international law must be utilized to combat impunity for these crimes. We encourage all States, the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to **cooperate** fully with the Court, since only this way its existence and efficiency will be preserved. The orders of the Court, especially the arrest warrants, must be fully and unconditionally implemented; assistance should be rendered to the Court also with regard to surrender, provision of evidence, protection and relocation of victims and witnesses and the enforcement of sentences.

The Rome Statute clearly states that the primary responsibility for investigation, prosecution and exchange of data lies within States, in accordance with the principle of **complementarity**. Recently in practice certain shortcomings are observed as regards the sufficient legal basis for interstate cooperation which would enable efficient and non-politicized prosecution of perpetrators of most serious international crimes. Slovenia is ready to engage in discussions on this issue.

Madame President,

Allow me to again commend the significance of the outcome of last year's **Review Conference** in Kampala, representing one of the milestones in strengthening international law and the rule of law. Now the time has come for all of us to implement the pledges given in Kampala and to adopt amendments to the Rome Statute. I am pleased to inform you that Slovenia is one of the first countries which have implemented the Kampala definition on the crime of aggression in its Criminal Code, entering into force in 2012.

Also the **Protection and Relocation Programme** is of crucial importance. We encourage the Court to continue with its endeavors to conclude as many witness protection and relocation agreements as possible. We also stress the importance of proper outreach to victims in order for them to have sufficient information about the Court and its procedures.

In conclusion, let me reiterate Slovenia's strong commitment to international criminal justice and the Court. We believe that long-lasting peace goes hand in hand with justice and that the ICC without doubt contributes to the establishment of lasting stability and peace in the affected areas. With our joint effort to guarantee an effective functioning of the Court, we are sending a strong message throughout the world – today it is becoming unimaginable that the most serious crimes against humanity would remain unpunished.

I thank you Madame President.