



*through genuine and durable partnerships”.*

2014 will therefore be a significant year for my country. Apart from hosting the international conference, it represents 52 years of independence and marks our official graduation from the UN category of Least Developed Countries.

For states still undecided on whether to become parties to the Rome Statute or not, let me share 2 important lessons from our membership to the Court:

1. Firstly, by ratifying the statute, Samoa has not signed away its sovereignty. It can still investigate and prosecute any international crime committed in Samoa unless the gravity of the crime is such that Samoa chooses to refer it to the ICC;
2. Secondly, being a member of the ICC guarantees that Samoa will not be a safe haven for international criminals. And being a small island nation does not preclude it from contributing positively to resolving issues of global concern to nations - issues such as the maintenance of world peace and stability, the upholding of principles that strengthen the Rule of Law, the struggle against impunity and the protection of the human rights of all.

Madame President

In closing, Samoa would like to commend the Court and the Prosecutor for their diligence and tireless efforts. We acknowledge the Secretariat for its facilitative contribution to the Court and Assembly. We also would like to place on record our appreciation of your able leadership during your tenure as President at the helm of our Assembly which witnessed a significant amount of work undertaken by the Bureau and its respective Working Groups, in particular your work in furthering the discussions on complementarity, cooperation and universality with outreach activities.

I thank you.