



SLOVENIA

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**Statement by
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia**

**Twelfth Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court
The Hague, 21 November 2013**

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

I am honoured to address the Assembly of States Parties on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia. I would also like to align myself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of Lithuania on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Let me begin by expressing our appreciation to you, Madam President, for your keen leadership. I would also like to commend the President of the Court, Madam Prosecutor and the Registrar for their determination in exercising their challenging duties. The Assembly of States Parties relies greatly on the work of its bodies and facilitators. We wish to warmly thank all of them. Allow me also to express our gratitude to all civil society organisations that contribute tirelessly to the promotion of international criminal justice.

Madam President,

Since its establishment in a historic decision against impunity more than a decade ago, the International Criminal Court has developed into a strong legal mechanism, offering access to justice to the victims of the most serious crimes, as well as contributing to peace, security and reconciliation.

With the Court's jurisprudential developments, recent accession to the Rome Statute by Côte d'Ivoire and a growing number of States Parties that decided to ratify the Kampala

amendments, the year 2013 has continued to register important achievements. I am pleased to inform you that Slovenia, too, has contributed to this progress by ratifying both Kampala amendments on 25 September 2013. We call upon other States Parties to ratify the Kampala amendments to strengthen the scope of the ICC. Wishing to enhance this process, I am glad to inform you that Slovenia, in close cooperation with Liechtenstein and the Global Institute for the Prevention of Aggression, will organise a regional seminar on ratification and implementation of Kampala amendments, which will take place in Ljubljana in spring 2014.

My delegation remains strongly committed to promoting the universality and integrity of the Rome Statute system. It is only through universal support for the Court, as well as the respect and implementation of the Rome Statute and Kampala amendments that the Court will be able to carry out its tasks most effectively.

Madam President,

Throughout the years, the international community has taken decisive steps forward in furthering the Rome Statute, but the end of our journey is yet to be reached. The Court still faces several challenges that call for solutions, not least with respect to concerns raised at the recent African Union Summit. Notwithstanding our strong commitment to the Court and the Rome Statute, it is essential that we listen carefully to all States Parties and that we engage in open, transparent and constructive dialogue in our efforts to bridge our differences in views. We hope that this year's special segment will provide a good starting point for seeking the solutions required. The Court requires strong support and cooperation from all States. In this context, we note that several proposals were put forward to amend the Rules of Procedure and Evidence and the Rome Statute. My delegation stands ready to join others in searching for thought-out solutions, true to the fundamental principles of the Rome Statute.

Madam President,

It is the primary responsibility of States to investigate and prosecute mass atrocity crimes. Focusing on domestic capacity building and inter-State cooperation is of paramount importance for the correct functioning of the principle of complementarity. In our endeavours to close some of these gaps, Slovenia, Netherlands, Belgium and Argentina work on an initiative for a new international instrument on mutual legal assistance and extradition between States to ensure effective domestic investigation and the prosecution of mass atrocity crimes. I am pleased that the support for the initiative is growing, and I would like to take this opportunity to invite all interested States to join. I wish also to recall that more than 20 States cosponsored a joint statement on the initiative, which will be posted on the Assembly's website. The list of countries cosponsoring the joint statement will stay open until the end of the Assembly.

Another important issue to discuss is cooperation. Full and prompt cooperation of States with the Court is an essential prerequisite for its successful functioning; however, still too often, we see States Parties failing to comply with their international obligations. It is important to bear in

mind that the obligation to cooperate with the Court also includes respecting witnesses' and witness-victims' rights against State interference.

Victims and their affected communities must remain at the forefront of our endeavours. We thus welcome this year's thematic debate focusing on victim's issues, including participation and reparation. In this regard, we would like to underline the crucial role of the Trust Fund for Victims and express our support for the Fund in the future.

Madam President,

Victims of mass atrocity crimes will continue to rely on the Court as their last resort in seeking accountability, equality before the law and justice. Therefore, it is our moral imperative to work towards an increasingly functioning international criminal system. This means, however, that we must address the challenges faced by the Court and seek the best possible solutions. My delegation is ready to contribute to this end.

Thank you, Madam President.