

Madame Chair,

On behalf of the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Sweden I would like to make the following statement.

I would like to draw the attention of State Parties to a paper entitled "Action Plan for expediting the criminal process of the International Criminal Court" circulated by the delegations mentioned above.

In the paper we note that the Court has now been in existence for over ten years. During this time a significant amount of experience has been collected relating to the conduct of proceedings.

During this year the Study Group on Governance (SGG), whose aim is to facilitate an ongoing and constructive dialogue with the organs of the Court in order to increase the Court's efficiency and expedite its proceedings, has put forward proposals for two amendments to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence (RPE) as well as proposals aimed at improving the so called Roadmap.

In this work the SGG has established an excellent working relationship with the Court in this area. The active participation of the Court in the process of expediting the criminal process has proven to be indispensable.

Although important progress has been made we believe that work to expedite the criminal process of the court needs to be accelerated further.

We intend to contribute to that by suggesting that the SGG in its work next year would focus on the "Pre-Trial and Trial relationship and common issues" cluster as described in the Courts Report on Lessons Learned. This is further developed in the paper that we have circulated.

We also welcome the intention of the Court to look further into the Language issues.

In its work the SGG could, where appropriate, take note of the relevant work by external stakeholders directed at improving the efficiency of the Court. The SGG might, on its own initiative, and in close cooperation with the Court, carry out further analysis based on such work.

The SGG should in our view at the next session of the Assembly be able to present concrete proposals for decisions to be taken by the ASP in all the above areas.

As Chairman of the SGG it is my intention to be guided by directions given in this paper and I would like to encourage all State Parties to take active part in this work.

I would like to have this statement included in the official records of this meeting.

Thank you Madam Chair.