



Statement of the Republic of Lithuania

Thirteenth Session of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court (8 – 17 December 2014, New York)

11 December 2014

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me state that Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

On behalf of my country, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the Assembly of States Parties of the Rome Statute. We assure you of our full support to your work in this highly responsible position, especially with regard to improving the relationship of all States Parties of the Rome Statute with the International Criminal Court, strengthening cooperation and complementarity, as well as working towards the universal ratification of the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

A State Party since 2003, Lithuania is strongly committed to full cooperation with the Court, preserving its independence and the integrity of the Rome Statute, and promoting its universality in order to end impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern.

It has been almost two years since the 122nd, thus far the last, ratification of the Rome Statute. Efforts need to be intensified in order to achieve the universal ratification of the Rome Statute. At the same time, an *ad hoc* acceptance of the Court's jurisdiction by Ukraine and the second referral by the Central African Republic earlier this year clearly demonstrate the confidence that both States

Parties and non-States Parties place in the Court. We encourage them to move forward towards ratification of the Rome Statute.

Effective functioning of the Court depends on the cooperation of all States, as well as the United Nations and other international and regional organizations. Without such cooperation the Court cannot fulfil its mandate. In this respect, we would like to particularly underline the need for enhanced cooperation with the UN Security Council. Cooperation between the Council and the Court should be further developed, in order to mainstream considerations of justice and accountability into the work of the Council, and to ensure consistent follow-up on the instances of non-cooperation. The issue of financing referrals to the Court by the UN Security Council also needs to be addressed.

It is essential that the Court be given not only full political support, but also adequate resources to carry out its mandate and effectively perform its functions under the pressure of a constantly increasing workload. At the same time, the need for adequate resources must be carefully balanced against the budgetary restraints of States Parties. Furthermore, the resources already available need to be used efficiently. In this regard we encourage the Court to further develop qualitative and quantitative indicators in order to better demonstrate its achievements and needs, and also to allow States Parties to assess its performance in a more strategic manner. Lithuania would support the inclusion of a specific item on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Court's activities in the agenda of the forthcoming session of the Assembly.

Mr. President,

Speaking about the resources at the disposal of the Court, human resources, primarily the judges, are just as crucial to its effective functioning. We congratulate the newly-elected judges. Lithuania firmly believes that only the most qualified candidates should be elected to serve as judges of the ICC. At the same time, while recognizing the advantages of having an Advisory Committee on Nominations carrying out a preliminary examination of the candidates, with regard to the most recent recommendations of the Advisory Committee, we note with regret that its judgments appear to have been affected by factual errors and inaccuracies and that questions may have arisen regarding the impartiality of its members. We therefore see considerable room for improvement in the working methods of the Advisory Committee in order to enhance the overall quality of its recommendations.

At the same time, we would like to stress the importance of the role of the Coalition for the ICC as a sounding board for all the candidates, especially because its hearings are open to the public and ensure the necessary degree of transparency *vis-à-vis* the qualifications and positions of the candidates.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by expressing our conviction that the International Criminal Court, working in the environment of full cooperation by all States Parties and respect for the integrity of the Rome Statute, will be capable of achieving justice for the victims of the most appalling crimes and contribute to the overall well-being of the world.

Thank you.