



# PHILIPPINES

## STATEMENT

by:

**H.E. JAIME VICTOR B. LEDDA**  
Ambassador and Head of Delegation  
Republic of the Philippines

On the

### GENERAL DEBATE

13<sup>th</sup> Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court  
United Nations Headquarters, New York  
11 December 2014

Thank you, Mr President.

The Philippines congratulates you on your election as the president of our Assembly for the next triennium. With you at the helm, we are confident that, to borrow from your own words, “justice can contribute through its work in the prevention, deterrence, punishment, repair, and restoration of the dignity of the victim, and in releasing people from collective guilt.”

Your experience as a human rights lawyer and as minister of justice of Senegal – the first State Party to the Rome Statute – will, no doubt, inform the four themes of your presidency, namely, the relations between Africa and the Court, cooperation, complementarity, and the universality of the Rome Statute.

We thank Ambassador Tiina Intelmann for her service and commitment to international criminal justice in the past triennium that she led our Assembly.

We also wish to thank the members of the Bureau, together with the The Hague and New York working groups which facilitated our work for the past year.

Mr President, modern international relations continues to mature from one that is power-based, to one that should be rules-based. This is the power and majesty of the

rule of law. Without it, there would not be international criminal justice, and without international criminal justice, global peace would not be possible.

The International Criminal Court is a cornerstone of global peace.

Today, the Philippines affirms its commitment to fighting impunity. We condemn the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Together, we should ensure that perpetrators account for their crimes.

Our long campaign to create a permanent international criminal court dates from the Nuremburg Trials. It culminated in in 2002, with the required ratification of 60 States Parties to the Rome Statute. In February 2003, the Assembly of States Parties elected the first bench of 18 judges, which included President Song Sang-hyun.

We thank President Song, the bench, the prosecution, and the whole team at The Hague for tirelessly promoting international criminal justice and the central role of the Court.

The Philippines congratulates the six new judges of the Court elected over the past few days. While they are certainly most deserving of their new positions, they have big shoes to fill.

Mr President, our goal is universality. We join the call for many more countries to ratify or accede to the Rome Statute, particularly from our Asia-Pacific region.

Consistent with the principle of complementarity, the Philippines strives to ensure that its criminal justice systems is transparent, fair, effective and relatively speedy, allowing for the prosecution of the crimes contemplated by the Rome Statute.

We pay close attention to the on-going judicial proceedings, investigations, and preliminary examinations of the Court. We are concerned about the present developments.

The work of justice is never easy. But the reality is that justice can be particularly complicated and difficult in countries affected if not devastated by violence and conflict.

Mr President, your election is indeed timely, and your thematic focus very fitting, that is, to mend the relations between the Court and African States Parties. The Philippines is hopeful and confident that we can surmount the challenge, if the Court, the UN, and the international community will join hands to genuinely understand and help developing country States Parties, particularly in Africa. We understand them, and their commitment to international criminal justice. We will work constructively with you and all States Parties to contribute to the resolution of the situation, and to the successful promotion of reconciliation.

We pledge our help to protect human rights and build domestic capacities, including through human resource development-related assistance like the training of judges, prosecutors, the police and the military.

Mr President, the UN development agenda is now transitioning to the post-2015 development agenda that will define the future global development framework. The Philippines advocates for the rule of law and human rights to be strongly reflected in the post-2015 development agenda. By so doing, the international community will affirm that there will be no peace without justice, not just for our generation, but also for generations yet to come.

Thank you, Mr President.