



**S L O V A K I A**

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**STATEMENT**

**by**

**H. E. Mr. František Ružička**  
**Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations**

**13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute  
of the International Criminal Court**

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**New York**

Mr. President, Excellency,

At the outset, allow me to **congratulate you on your election as President of the Assembly**. I wish you all the success in your endeavours. I would like to assure you of the support of my country to the activities necessary for fulfilment of your mandate.

At the same time, I would like to express our most sincere **gratitude to the outgoing President Ambassador Intelmann for her excellent work**, strong personal commitment and dedication. Ambassador Intelmann has carried out her responsibilities and actively promoted the aims, values and fundamental principles of the International Criminal Court.

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovakia strongly supports the International Criminal Court in its efforts to tackle impunity for the worst atrocities, holding their perpetrators to account and delivering justice and providing redress to victims. In this respect, **Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement presented yesterday by Italy on behalf of the European Union**.

In the upcoming days this Assembly will discuss variety of issues with direct impact on the future operation of the Court. We welcome the election of judges and members of the Committee on Budget and Finance. It is our sincere hope that all newly elected judges will assume their duties without delay and thus will contribute to the successful mission of the Court.

Slovakia considers the **cooperation of States with the Court a necessary prerequisite for its overall success**. Providing the Court with necessary assistance is a clear expression of respect of States to the principles upon which it was established. All States Parties are under legal obligation to cooperate fully with the Court.

Allow me to point out some issues we consider challenging:

- a) The **problem of non-cooperation** has become one of the most pressing issues. The enforcement of arrest warrants and obstacles in gathering evidence still belong to key problems the Court faces today.
- b) The **protection of witnesses**. Only effective protection is capable to secure objective investigations and prosecutions of the crimes falling within the Court's jurisdiction. The witnesses who appear before the Court and might be therefore at risk should be provided with adequate protective measures and the Court should utilize all tools available for their protection. We **strongly condemn any attempts to put unacceptable pressure on witnesses** to influence their testimonies.
- c) The **United Nations Security Council should support the referrals of situations to the Court** with an effective follow-up enforcement mechanism enabling the Court to fulfil its mandate effectively.
- d) We must **avoid steps which could undermine the integrity** of the system of international criminal justice and the trust put into it. Consideration of any amendment proposal to the Rome Statute or to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence should be seriously scrutinized. We need to keep in mind that the Court is a judicial body and as the guardians of the Rome Statute **we have to defend its independence and impartiality** against any attempts of political interference. While listening very carefully to concerns raised by any of the States Parties we cannot resign on the core principles and fundamental values the architecture of the Rome Statute is build on.
- e) **Sufficient budgetary framework** is a necessary precondition for fulfilment of the mandate of any international organization. The annual budget should reflect the needs of the Court and allow the Court conduct properly and in timely manner its workload in 2015. It is necessary for the credibility of the Court that all financial means will be **allocated wisely and used in a transparent way**. States Parties have their own budgetary scrutiny and have right to ask for effectiveness. We hope that the recommendations of the Committee on Budget and Finance will be duly taken into account during our further discussions. Slovakia welcomes all efforts of the Court and its principal organs aiming at improving its efficiency. We firmly believe that the Court will further streamline its work in order to continue building a modern and effective institution of international criminal justice.

Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to inform you that earlier this year Slovakia ratified both Kampala Amendments adopted at the Review Conference in 2010. We encourage the other States to do the same. We hope that the number of ratifications necessary for the activation of the Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression will be achieved by the end of 2016.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me once again reiterate Slovakia's on-going and full support to the International Criminal Court - a cornerstone of international criminal justice and one of the key actors promoting justice and rule of law at international level.

Thank you for your attention.