



**NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**14th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court**

**Statement by
Mr. Martin Sørby
Director
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Mr President,

Initially, Norway would like to express our thanks and appreciation to you for your able guidance of the Assembly's work during the past year.

We would also like to extend our most sincere appreciation to the officials and staff of all organs of the ICC for their considerable effort in the fight against impunity. Highly qualified and experienced leadership of the Court is key to ensuring a fair, effective and independent International Criminal Court.

We thank you for the hard work you have conducted over the course of the last year, and take this opportunity to restate our commitment to the Court as a judicial and independent institution that has now become an important, global actor. With a growing caseload, demand for the Court's services makes it necessary to stretch limited resources to the maximum. We commend the endeavours of the Registrar through the *ReVision* project to this end.

Mr President,

Although we have every reason to commend the progress made, we note that the Court is still a young institution, working under difficult circumstances, and in need of all the diplomatic and political support that

we can muster. We therefore encourage States Parties to seize every available opportunity to affirm their commitment to the mission and mandate of the Court.

In this regard, we are pleased that the Court will soon move into the new premises. This will strengthen not only the visibility of the Court, but also its ability to deliver in accordance with our expectations and the Court's mandate. We also expect that the new premises will give opportunities to optimize work and increase efficiency.

Mr President,

The intrinsic links between institutional strength, effectiveness, fairness and the independence of the Court also play out in the context of the annual budgetary debates. We must recognize the concrete impact that our decisions on this matter may have on the abilities of the Court and the Office of the prosecutor in carrying out thorough assessments and open-ended investigations. Confidence in and high expectations of the ICC must be complemented with sufficient financial resources, and it is our responsibilities as States Parties to ensure that this is put in place.

As the judicial and investigative workload of the Court is increasing, it is vital to ensure that it has the necessary budgetary resources to function effectively. Norway recognizes the difficult financial situation facing many States Parties. In this context, it is particularly important that the Court demonstrate willingness and ability to increase its efficiency and effectiveness, as well as optimize the use of limited resources. In our view, however, limited resources may not necessarily lead to effectiveness, but could in some circumstances result in delays in investigations and court proceedings. Worse, resource constraints could also lead to impunity in situations where the Court has a clear mandate to act. For these reasons, we would take a critical approach to suggestions that could prevent the Court from carrying out its mandate in an effective manner. We recognize in this regard the constructive cooperation between the organs of the Court and the CBF in their common endeavour to optimizing use of the limited resources available.

Mr President,

As chair of the Working Group of Amendment, Norway has had the great pleasure of facilitating important discussions on proposed amendments to the Rome Statute and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence. First, we would like to underline the cooperative and congenial spirit that has

characterized the Working Group over the course of the year. It is a great pleasure to be able to report that the Working Group has achieved consensus on recommending to the ASP the deletion of Article 124.

Considering the various proposals by State Parties to amend the Statute, we have done our utmost to ensure transparent, substantive and fair discussions and that all the amendment proposals are treated with equity. We will continue to invite proponents to discuss their proposals, including by organizing expert briefings.

Mr President,

Our roles in executing the decisions and meeting the requests of the Court flow from the legal obligations contained in the Rome Statute, but should also come as a direct response to the threat against peace, security and well-being of the world that crimes under the jurisdiction of the Court constitute. In this context, we urge all States to comply with their legal obligations under Security Council resolutions 1593 and 1970 concerning the situations in Darfur and Libya, and to refrain from engaging in non-essential contacts with individuals who are under arrest warrants from the Court.

This Assembly will provide an opportunity for dialogue between States Parties, from different continents and from different legal traditions. We welcome this opportunity. We approach this dialogue with full respect for the integrity of the Statute and the independence of the Court.

Mr President,

Norway hereby affirms its strong commitment to the mission and mandate of ICC, which is to end impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to Mankind. With these words, we look forward to a constructive, productive and inclusive process at this 14th Assembly of States Parties.

Thank you.