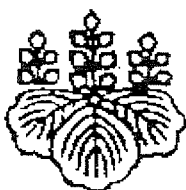


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JAPAN

Statement

by

H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Inomata

Ambassador of Japan to the Netherlands

**At the Fifteenth Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the
Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)**

The Hague, 17 November 2016

*H.E. Mr. Sidiki Kaba, President of the Assembly of States Parties,
Judge Silvia Alejandra Fernandez, President of the International Criminal Court,
Madam Fatou Bensouda, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court,
Mr. Herman von Hebel, Registrar of the International Criminal Court,*

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would also like to begin by expressing the sincere appreciation of the Government of Japan for the leadership of President Silvia Alejandra Fernandez and the Presidency, as well as all the efforts made by other judges, the Prosecutor, the Registrar and the staff of the Court for advancing the work of the Court amidst the challenges in its fight against impunity.

Mr. President,

Japan's core policy towards the Court is to enable it to function effectively and sustainably with the support and trust of the international community. Japan is proud to be one of the major financial contributors to this permanent international tribunal. We are also dedicated to supporting the Court through capable human resources, including judges, and became the first State Party to participate in the ICC Junior Professional Officers programme this year. We hope that this programme will enable many junior officers to gain experience and knowledge at the ICC while also

contributing to its work.

Mr. President,

Japan believes that the ICC has made steady progress in the judicial field. The Court has been exercising its jurisdiction over 10 situations, and 10 preliminary examinations are ongoing. This year, the Court delivered verdicts on two cases of Central African Republic and Mali respectively, which represent the Court's efforts for efficient and expeditious judicial proceedings. Given the increasing workload of the Court, it is all the more important to pursue further efficiency in the use of its financial and human resources to deliver on its mission effectively. In this regard, we welcome several important initiatives being undertaken within the Court, including the court-wide exercises based on the "One-Court principle" aimed at achieving optimal use of resources and building trust with the international community, as well as the launch of policy papers by the Office of the Prosecutor providing guidelines and greater clarity on case selection and prioritization, for instance. We also welcome the positive outcomes of the ReVision Project completed last year that resulted in a more streamlined Registry. With this outcome, the Registry would be expected to enhance capabilities to support the Court's prosecutorial and judicial activities. We stand to see how these developments will contribute to enhancing the Court's effectiveness in the coming years.

States Parties, on the other hand, have also made efforts to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Court including through the Study Group on Governance to which I am personally committed along with my colleagues who serve

as co-chair and focal points.

Mr. President,

This year has been the first year for the Court to operate in the new premises and I wish to extend our appreciation to the Registry, especially the Project Director's Office and the Oversight Committee, for their hard work in bringing the construction project to completion. The project has seen difficult issues especially in relation to increasing financial requirements, part of which are still pending discussion among States Parties at this session of the Assembly. Subject to any pending decisions on the financing of the project, we must now turn our eyes to the future funding and governance scheme of the Total Cost of Ownership of the permanent premises. Japan strongly calls for financial prudence in any future plans as we remain engaged with other States Parties and the Court to work on this issue.

Let me now turn to the important role of the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV) in victim reparation. We note with appreciation the approval and order by Trial Chamber II issued just last month to start implementation of a plan submitted by the TFV for symbolic collective reparations for the victims in relation with the case of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, as this represents the first concrete step of executing the TFV's mandate on reparation. I am pleased to announce that the Government of Japan, following its contributions in the previous years, will make a contribution of 46,978 euros to the TFV this year for its activities to support the victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Japan reaffirms its commitment to support the TFV in delivering on its mission to achieve reparative justice to victims under the Rome

Statute.

Mr. President,

To ensure that the ICC effectively promotes the rule of law over the world, Japan strongly believes that the ICC should aim at becoming a truly universal criminal court so that it can gain strong support for its work. In this regard, we are worried about recent decisions taken by some African States Parties to withdraw from the ICC. In order to gain support and cooperation from a greater number of States towards its activities, the ICC and its States Parties should listen to the concerns expressed by each individual country and make efforts to enhance its universality. Japan spares no effort for that purpose and intends to remain engaged in dialogues with each of these States Parties.

At the same time, Japan is fully aware of its role in the Asia-Pacific region, and we are prepared to engage with any non-States Parties and to promote awareness and consideration vis-à-vis their potential ratification of the Rome Statute.

In closing, I wish to express the sincere appreciation of Japan for the work that the ICC has accomplished to date. It is our belief that the ICC will continue to consolidate its credibility and reputation both inside and outside the Rome Statute system. Japan, for its part, is determined to further strengthen its contribution to the ICC and thus to the establishment of the rule of law in the international community.

Thank you.