



LITHUANIA

**Sixteenth Session of the Assembly of States Parties of the International
Criminal Court (New York, 4 – 14 December 2017)**

**Statement on behalf of the Republic of Lithuania
by
H.E. Ms. Audra Plepytė
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania
to the United Nations**

7 December 2017

Mr. President,

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

A State Party since 2003, Lithuania is a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court (ICC). We regard the ICC as an essential instrument of the international community in fighting impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern and bringing justice for the victims of those awful criminal acts. Therefore, my country is committed to full cooperation with the Court, preserving its independence and promoting the universality and integrity of the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

There is no doubt that the Rome Statute will not be complete without establishing accountability for the crime of aggression. The crime of aggression goes against the very purpose that the United Nations was established for. Yet, more than seventy years on, it becomes increasingly relevant as the international community has to cope time and again with such manifest violations of the United Nations Charter. On its part, Lithuania deposited the instrument of ratification of the Kampala amendments exactly two years ago (on 7 December

2015). We warmly welcome most recent ratification of the Kampala amendments by Panama and call on all other States Parties to the Rome Statute that have not done so yet to ratify the Kampala amendments. We also encourage all Member States of the United Nations to ratify the Rome Statute as amended in Kampala. A pending decision on the activation of the Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression remains an important part of the compromise reached in Kampala. My delegation strongly hopes that a decision on the activation will be adopted during the current session by consensus and without re-opening the carefully balanced compromise. We stand ready to work in that regard.

Mr. President,

Lithuania does acknowledge that the International Criminal Court is not a perfect institution and that there is room for improvement. Therefore, we should engage in a constructive dialogue among all States Parties on how to improve the functioning of the Court.

It is of crucial importance that the International Criminal 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 constantly increasing workload. The need for adequate resources must be carefully balanced against the budgetary restraints of States Parties. At the same time, available resources need to be used efficiently.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by reiterating Lithuania's firm commitment to supporting the International Criminal Court as a fully independent international judicial institution which has been established with complementary jurisdiction to that of States Parties. Effective functioning of the Court depends crucially on cooperation with all States, as well as international and regional organizations and civil society. Without such support, the Court cannot fully exercise its mandate. We pledge our full cooperation with the Court in its fight against impunity.

Thank you for your attention.