



Nigerian Coalition on the International Criminal Court (NCICC)

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**STATEMENT BY Mr. CHINO OBIAGWU
NIGERIAN COALITION ON THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
(NCICC) TO THE 16TH ASSEMBLY OF STATE PARTIES OF THE ROME
STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ASP16)
DECEMBER 8, 2017**

Mr. President, delegates

As we move closer to the 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute of the international Criminal Court, the world's vulnerable citizens will be asking what you, the state parties and the court, have done to give hope to humanity, to give back life to millions of victims, and to bring perpetrators of atrocity crimes to justice.

I represent the Nigerian Coalition on the ICC as well as the network of national coalitions on ICC in 23 countries in Africa. The people of Africa look upon the ICC as the last hope for justice and security for future generations. This was the vision of the Rome Statute, and a mission that must not be lost.

We comment those African state parties that stood firmly with the ICC at the very turbulent times when the African Union, though not a state party to the Rome Statute, tried to truncate the justice mission of ICC in Africa by mobilizing against the court, finding allies in governments of countries that are not state parties to the Rome Statute. History reckons those countries that rejected the call for mass withdrawal from the Rome Statute, and in so doing stood with the ordinary people of the continent who are in search for justice, peace and security.

We encourage African state parties to continue with informed dialogue and consultations within and outside the continent in order to ensure that the purpose of the ICC is well understood among African leaders and the African public. The occasion of the 20th anniversary provides that opportunity for wide outreaches to the political society and the public.

Mr. President, we want to draw attention of the ASP to the need to increase the budget of the court, bearing in mind that the court is going into the next phase of its existence and its mission. The court is undertaking new tasks and will be faced with greater challenges than it had faced before. A zero or marginal budget increase for the court will undermine its effectiveness and independence, and frustrate the ICC project. We call on all states parties, especially African state parties, to pay up their financial commitment to the court, as an important way of genuinely demonstrating their commitment to international justice.

We in the civil society in Africa will continue to support the court, and we sincerely thank you for giving us the opportunity to address this 16th Assembly.