



SLOVENIA

STATEMENT

BY

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of the Republic of Slovenia**

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the International Criminal Court**

General debate

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Mr Vice-President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to stand before you on behalf of Slovenia in order to express my government's steadfast and strong support to the rules-based international system and the indispensable role of the International Criminal Court.

Allow me to begin by extending my country's sincere appreciation for the leadership of the President of the Assembly in the past years. His guidance and wisdom helped the Assembly successfully navigate some troubled waters, and we thank him for that. I also wish to congratulate the President-elect of the Assembly, Mr O-Gon Kwon.

The Assembly sessions provide an important occasion to revitalise our strong commitment to the Court, evaluate its new developments and discuss ways to strengthen it. These sessions also carry a sense of responsibility. This year, several elections have taken place that will influence the future work of both the Court and the Assembly and I am pleased that Slovenia will play an active role in the incoming Bureau. Furthermore, many important decisions need to be made, including on the historic and long-awaited activation of the Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression.

Slovenia commends the Court on its numerous achievements since our last gathering. These include notable developments in judicial proceedings, the Court's efficiency and effectiveness, as well as outreach activities. Engaged in almost all regions of the world, the Court continued to have a heavy workload.

Slovenia is very pleased to note the positive developments regarding reparations to victims. Assistance to victims and reparations for their suffering are essential for justice to be truly meaningful. The Trust Fund for Victims plays an important role in this respect. I am therefore very pleased that this year Slovenia secured a financial contribution to the fund.

We would also like to welcome the new ratifications of the Rome Statute amendments and to underline the need to continue with concerted efforts to bring us closer to the Court's universality. We welcome the decision by The Gambia to revoke notification of withdrawal from the Rome Statute and regret the decision announced today by the government of South Africa.

Mr Vice-President,

One of the key tasks for this Assembly session is to activate the Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression. This is the last step to bring the historic achievement in Kampala to life. In Kampala, States affirmed their belief that the most serious forms of the illegal use of force should be criminalised. It is precisely this belief that should now guide our remaining deliberations.

As the second state that both ratified and implemented the amendments, Slovenia expresses its strong support for a swift and consensual activation decision during this session. We also support the proposed amendments to Article 8 of the Rome Statute.

Another important discussion concerns the budget. The Court's effectiveness is closely related to the allocation of sufficient financial resources. Indeed, the effective use of resources is vital. At the same time, it is crucial that the outcome of the budgetary process does not impede the Court's mandate. In addition, with more than 32 million euros in outstanding contributions, Slovenia calls on those States in arrears to consider prioritising their financial commitments in favour of the Court.

The Court needs and deserves our strong political commitment, as well as full and prompt cooperation. Slovenia remains troubled by instances of non-cooperation. We regret the fact that 15 arrest warrants issued by the Court remain outstanding, some of them for several years. Slovenia therefore calls upon all States to abide by their international commitments.

Like other international organisation, the Court is not free of challenges. It is important that it continues to introduce improvements and address criticism where it might be warranted. At the same time, we need to respond to any misperceptions that might undermine the Court or actions that could negatively affect its integrity and independence.

Mr Vice-President,

Only a few weeks separate us from the year marking the 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute. I am pleased to say that Slovenia has already launched preparations for various activities to mark the anniversary, including high level and other outreach activities.

As a staunch supporter of the Court, which rests on the principle of complementarity, Slovenia, together with Argentina, Belgium, the Netherlands, Mongolia and Senegal, will continue its efforts aimed at the adoption of a treaty on mutual legal assistance and extradition for the domestic prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. I am pleased that 58 States, including States not Parties to the Rome Statute, have already joined the MLA initiative. I would also like to invite all other States to join.

In addition to actions in support of the Court, Slovenia also recognizes the special opportunity of the 20th anniversary for the Assembly to engage in a more strategic and forward-looking way in some of areas that are important for the functioning of the Court and the Assembly. This includes the relationship with the United Nations and, in particular, the Security Council. And allow me to say that I feel encouraged by the presence of the UN Secretary General during the opening session. An in-depth discussion could also focus on areas such as the adequacy of the existing budgetary process, the oversight role of the Assembly, the sustainability of the Trust Fund funding and universality.

The year 2018 will offer many opportunities to reinvigorate our activities in support of the Court. Let us use this occasion to the best of our abilities!

To conclude, I would like to congratulate the newly elected judges of the Court and to wish them an ambitious and successful start to their mandates. Our special gratitude goes to President Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi for leading the Court in such a dedicated and result-oriented manner.

Thank you.