

**STATEMENT DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF GHANA DELEGATION BY
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ADVISOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF GHANA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS AT THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF
STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CRIMINAL COURT, THE HAGUE, 2ND TO 7TH DECEMBER, 2019**

Mr. President,

I have the honour to join previous speakers to convey Ghana's appreciation to you and the Bureau for your tireless efforts in steering the affairs of the Assembly over the past year and the able manner in which you have conducted this meeting so far and to assure you of Ghana's support during this session. Our appreciation also goes to the President of the Court, Judge Chile Eboe-Osuji, as well as to the Secretariat, for the excellent work done in the management of the affairs of the Court over the past year.

Mr. President,

Ghana remains committed to its obligations under the Rome Statute and the work of the ICC as a mechanism for punishing crimes of impunity, and as a deterrent for potential perpetrators of such crimes.

Mr. President,

Ghana notes with appreciation the various efforts being made by the Court and the Assembly to address concerns raised by State Parties on equitable geographical representation and gender balance in the recruitment of staff, to ensure institutional efficiency and impartiality in the workings of the Court and the Rome Statute Systems.

In commending these efforts, Ghana is not oblivious to the fact that the Court still faces a number of challenges and criticisms by some Member States, non-State Parties and Civil Society Organizations alike. Despite these challenges, as rightly captured by President Osuji during the presentation of the report on the activities of the Court, it is worthy to note that the Court has made some positive impact in the governance structure of States where the Court did some preliminary investigations. These investigations served as warnings to politicians in those States not to engage in activities that disturbed the peace since they stood the chance of being hauled to the Court, thus, a positive influence on peace. In countries where election violence were investigated they were not repeated in

subsequent elections, as political actors in those countries changed their behaviour since they knew the Court was watching.

Ghana continues to call for dialogue and engagement in addressing the challenges the Court is currently facing, particularly, in its relationship with all relevant stakeholders. In this same vein, my delegation welcomes the initiative of the Court, States Parties and other stakeholders to review and strengthen the Court and the Rome Statute Systems in the pursuit of international criminal justice.

Mr. President,

On the principle of complementarity, Ghana wishes to commend the ad-country focal points for complementarity, and particularly, Australia and Romania, for their efforts in leading the discussions on the subject. Ghana believes that an effective domestic implementation of the Statute will enhance the capacity of national jurisdictions to prosecute the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of international concern and that will certainly decrease the workload of the Court as well as the financial burden associated with such workload. Ghana also wishes to commend your efforts as President, for consistently highlighting the importance of the principle of complementarity in various fora. As you rightly stated in your intervention,

at the annual Conference of the International Bar Association, held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 22 to 27 September 2019, you reminded participants of the fact that the principle of complementarity is the bedrock of the Statute, which leaves the primary responsibility for addressing Rome Statute crimes in the hands of national jurisdictions. It is regrettable to note, however, that only half of the 122 States Parties have adopted the necessary national implementing legislation to ensure they have the capacity to investigate and prosecute these crimes at the domestic level. Ghana wishes to emphasize that for complementarity to be effective, States need to incorporate the Rome Statute crimes as well as other general principles of international criminal law into their respective national penal codes.

Mr. President,

Let me also use this opportunity to inform Member States that Ghana will soon implement legislation to give effect to the Rome Statute domestically. This pledge was made by His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, during the annual inaugural public lecture in International Criminal Justice at the Ghana Institute of

Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) organised by African Centre of International Criminal Justice (ACICJ) on 16th October 2019.

On behalf of the government of Ghana, I take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to the President of the Court, Judge Chile Eboe Osuji for graciously delivering an inspiring speech as Special Guest at the GIMPA Public lecture in International Criminal Justice in Accra.

Mr. President,

On the Trust Fund for victims, my delegation will like to emphasize that, the provision of reparations and assistance to the survivors of gravest human rights violations remain an indispensable component in the international criminal justice system. Accordingly, Ghana wishes to thank all who have made voluntary contributions to the Fund and call on others who are capable to do so.

In conclusion, **Mr. President,** permit me to express my delegation's appreciation to the Government and Peoples of The Netherlands for their continuous support to the Court as host and for the warm hospitality extended to members of Ghana's delegation.

I thank you.

