



STATEMENT
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ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES
GENERAL DEBATE

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Mr. President,

Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your deserved election to steer the proceedings of this Assembly. I wish to assure you of my Delegation's support and cooperation.

Mr. President,

This Session is taking place at the time when the International Criminal Court is increasingly facing challenges and political attacks with respect to its work as the tool to fight impunity in the international community as a whole. This annual gathering helps us to take stock of the work of the Court and find ways and means of dealing with the challenges that it is facing. It is this body that should be vigilant to work towards making sure that the Court is impartial, transparent, efficient and accountable to its constituents.

Mr. President,

For the past two decades of the ICC's operations, the Rome Statute system has seen both positives and negatives. It is the negatives that we need to deal with so that the system continues to carry out its functions efficiently. In that regard, it is pleasing to note the various initiatives aimed at realising better implementation of the Rome Statute system.

Mr. President,

Malawi supports the various initiatives that are being undertaken in order to maintain the relevance of this Rome Statute system. One such initiative is the continuous quest to update the Rome Statute through proposals for amendments. Indeed the Kampala Amendments are a beacon of what the States Parties can do if they have a common resolve to end impunity. Malawi would support similar proposals such as that on starvation of civilians as a weapon of war. Similar considerations may be had regarding the introduction of corruption as a crime under the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

For the Court to be efficient in its work, Judges that are elected to the Court must be highly qualified. In that connection, Malawi welcomes the initiative to amend the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee on Nominations of Judges. The inclusion of interviews in a round table to assess the suitability of a candidate for the position of judge is a welcome idea. However, it is important to ensure transparency in all the processes in line with the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

Malawi also expresses its support for the Independent Expert Review process that is being envisaged to be undertaken in the same spirit of improving the efficacy of the Court. I am aware that the New York Working Group has been working on the mandate of

the Panel of Independent Experts which is commendable. Let me reiterate once again that ensuring transparency, inclusiveness and efficiency is key to all these initiatives, if they are to yield the desired results.

Universalisation of the Rome Statute system is another important aspect which the Assembly has to put a lot of efforts on. The wide acceptance of the Court and its system is key to fighting impunity in the world community. In that connection, my Delegation urges for continued reaching out to those States that have not ratified the Rome Statute to consider doing so.

In conclusion, my Delegation looks forward to the fruitful deliberations under your able leadership of this Session, Mr. President.

I thank you for your attention.