



**ROYAL NORWEGIAN
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**18th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute
of the International Criminal Court**

**Statement by
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Mr President,

It is a great privilege to address this Assembly on behalf of the Government of Norway.

I would like to start by thanking the President of the Assembly for his able leadership. I would also like to express our sincere appreciation of the dedicated work of all the Court officials and staff.

Mr President,

Norway has been a staunch supporter of the ICC from the outset. And we will remain a consistent partner in the fight against impunity.

The ICC is a fundamental element of the rules-based order that the international community has established for our common good. However, we cannot take its success for granted. Multilateralism continues to come under pressure. The ICC is facing continual political opposition and external challenges. In addition, the Court's own performance is falling short of our expectations. We need to address these challenges in order to fulfil the vision of the drafters of the Rome Statute. Our common goal must be to ensure a strong, effective and independent Court.

Norway welcomes the work currently being undertaken by States Parties, the Court and civil society to address the challenges facing the Court. We should use this Assembly to take important steps to improve the way the Court functions. Key tasks include commissioning an independent expert review and setting a roadmap for further work on reform.

In the important year ahead of us, we must work towards concrete deliverables to the Assembly in 2020. Some measures however should be implemented as a matter of urgency. We as States Parties have an obligation to ensure that the best qualified candidates are nominated and elected to the judiciary.

In light of the judicial elections to be held in December 2020, Norway supports the adoption of a resolution on the nomination and election of judges. A credible process for nominations and elections is crucial for a strong and legitimate judiciary.

Mr President,

Norway believes that reforms should focus on making investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings more effective, as these areas are essential for fulfilling the mandate of the Court. We encourage the Court to consider further measures to enhance its effectiveness. At the same time, we, as States Parties, should be willing to consider how we can rationalize our work.

The quality of investigations and prosecutions of the most serious crimes is critical to the ICC's success. Next year's election of the new Prosecutor is therefore paramount. We would like to underline the importance of a transparent, non-political and merit-based process leading up to the election.

Mr President,

Looking back at the past year, we would like to commend the Working Group on Amendments for its achievements. We hope that this Assembly will adopt by consensus a resolution on amending article 8 of the Rome Statute to include the war crime of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare in non-international armed conflict. In our view, this is both timely and necessary in light of developments in current conflicts.

Mr President,

Let me conclude by reiterating Norway's strong commitment to the mission and mandate of the ICC. We look forward to constructive, productive and inclusive discussions on how to improve the effectiveness, results and impact of the Court at this Assembly.

Thank you.