



# SLOVENIA

## STATEMENT

by H. E. Sanja Štiglic,

**Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia in the Kingdom of the Netherlands at  
the 18th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the  
International Criminal Court**

**The Hague**

**2 December 2019**

Mr. President,  
Distinguished Members of the Court,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing my appreciation to you, Mr. President, and your leadership over the past two years. I would also like to commend the President of the Court who recently visited Slovenia, Madam Prosecutor and the Registrar for their dedicated work and for the time and effort they have devoted to their service in fulfilling the Court's mission.

Slovenia fully supports what was already said by the Finnish Minister of the Foreign Affairs on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Ladies and gentlemen,

International law is the foundation of our society. It is widely recognized today that there can be no sustainable peace without justice and no justice unless the worst crimes – atrocity crimes - are subject to law. This is why the role of this court is so important. I am here to assure you of Slovenia's unwavering commitment to upholding international law at every opportunity, and of our wholehearted support to this Court and its work.

We know that the ICC can only fulfill its role in protecting human rights and winning the fight against impunity with the active engagement and full and prompt cooperation of the States Parties. As Rome Statute crimes still plague our world, and innocent children, women and men continue to fall victim to unimaginable atrocities, this matter is of vital importance. We are deeply concerned by the attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the Court. The Court needs and deserves our strong political commitment and unequivocal support, as well as adequate budget to fulfill its mandate.

We will continue to support efforts to achieve universality of the Court and we welcome the most recent accession of Kiribati to the Rome Statute.

The Court is of course not free of challenges. Slovenia welcomes the ongoing review process and expects that it will bring concrete improvements on the basis of the broadest possible support through the engagement of the states parties, the Court, independent experts and civil society.

Mr. President,

I would also like to draw the attention to the legal challenges regarding sexual violence. Slovenia strongly supports the initiatives for advancing the knowledge and understanding of all forms of sexual violence and enhancing the international criminal law, policies and practices in order to address sexual violence more effectively. We also co-sponsored the side event during this ASP on The Hague Principles on Sexual Violence where this important topic was discussed.

Slovenia also supports the proposal to make the intentional use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare, a war crime under the Rome Statute in the context of non-international armed conflicts.

Just as the fight against impunity is a key aspect of the ICC's work, so is providing reparative justice to victims of international crimes, their families and communities. We thus welcome the fact that the reparations mandate of the Trust Fund for Victims is beginning to play a larger role in the Trust Fund's work. Slovenia continuously supports the Trust Fund for Victims and contributed to the Fund this year as well.

Mr. President,

Let me take this opportunity to recall that the ICC is a court of last resort. States, within our national jurisdictions, always bear the primary responsibility to ensure accountability. In order to make real advances in the global struggle against impunity, we need to strengthen the work of the ICC and of national jurisdictions in parallel.

To provide national courts with the necessary tools Slovenia, together with Argentina, Belgium, the Netherlands, Mongolia and Senegal, leads the Initiative on Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition for Domestic Prosecution of the Most Serious International Crimes. The MLA Initiative proposes an international convention to facilitate states' cooperation in these matters. I warmly invite you to attend the MLA side event on 3 December where you can learn more about this process and its value.

Mr. President,

I am pleased to announce that a diplomatic conference to negotiate the MLA treaty will take place in Ljubljana in June 2020. 69 States have already expressed their support for the Initiative and we call on others to follow suit.

Thank you for your attention.

