



S L O V A K I A

STATEMENT

by

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**State Secretary
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs**

**20th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of
the International Criminal Court**

General debate

The Hague, 6 December 2021

Madam President,

While aligning myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union, I have the honour to address the Assembly with further observations in national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the new President and Vice-Presidents, the Prosecutor, as well as the Judges elected during the previous session of the Assembly.

I also wish to reiterate the profound belief of Slovakia that the mere existence of a permanent international judicial organ having jurisdiction over the most heinous crimes under international law reflects the universal nature of rule of law and accountability. The imperatives of justice and humanity are reflected in the Rome Statute. The International Criminal Court makes sure that these general rules and aspirations are applied to very specific situations, thereby bringing justice to communities affected by conflict and making a contribution to sustainable peace and reconciliation.

Madam President,

2021 has been a very eventful year for the Rome Statute system and the International Criminal Court. The newly elected officials have assumed their offices at a critical juncture for the Court. The momentum carried by the new leadership of the Court must be used for the strengthening of the Court, by making it more efficient, effective and fit for the achievement of the noble goals enshrined in the Rome Statute. The on-going review process carries a huge, once-in-a-generation potential. We must ensure that this potential is materialised to its fullest extent.

The Group of Independent Experts has unveiled many pertinent issues and recommended possible measures to address them. The discussions have already yielded tangible results, for example the agreement on the procedure of Rule amendments. Legal certainty, combined with the ability to adapt to practical challenges to the judicial work, are crucial for the proper operation of the Court. We are confident that the resolution the Assembly will adopt at this session will achieve exactly this.

Madam President,

Slovakia firmly believes that political and practical support to the cause of the fight against impunity and specifically to the International Criminal Court must go hand in hand.

The Court, by granting a strong voice to victims, has been a beacon of hope for conflict-torn communities. In this regard, we appreciate the work done by the Trust Fund for Victims fulfilling both its reparations and assistance mandates. It is therefore my pleasure to announce that Slovakia will make a voluntary contribution to the Trust Fund again this year.

Furthermore, Slovakia is negotiating the terms of a bilateral agreement on voluntary cooperation with the Court. I firmly believe that the discussions will come to a fruitful conclusion, whereby Slovakia would provide a very practical support for the fulfilment of the Court's mandate.

To conclude, Madam President, Slovakia wishes to recall its unwavering support for the Court. We remain determined to continue working constructively with all partners for a successful system of international criminal justice.

I thank you.