

**Statement on Behalf of the United States of America**  
**20<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute**  
**December 7, 2021**

**Remarks by Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security,  
Democracy and Human Rights Uzra Zeya [pre-recorded]**

Thank you, Madame President, and greetings from Washington.

On behalf of President Biden, and Secretary Blinken, I am honored to present remarks on behalf of the United States' observer delegation to this year's Assembly of States Parties.

The ASP is an indispensable pillar of the International Criminal Court's architecture. You are essential to strengthening the Court and realizing the promise of justice.

The United States recognizes the significance of this moment for the ICC. Approaching 20 years since the Rome Statute entered into force, the Court has achieved meaningful advances in justice for victims of the worst crimes known to humanity – crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

The Court has established itself as an important part of the multilateral system in the fight against impunity. And, over the past year, States Parties, ICC officials, and civil society have made substantial progress on efforts to identify and implement reforms that will help the Court better achieve its core mandate, including those identified in the comprehensive Independent Expert Review report.

The United States is pleased to be at this meeting and stands ready to engage with all of you to continue to advance our shared objective of ensuring accountability for the most serious international crimes.

While we maintain our longstanding objection to the Court's efforts to assert jurisdiction over personnel of non-States Parties absent a Security Council referral or the consent of the State, we believe that our concerns are best addressed through engagement with all stakeholders.

We look forward to listening to all those here. From States Parties, whose active engagement is critical to the ICC's success; to victims and civil society, who prevail upon all States to find justice for atrocity crimes; and to the leadership and staff of the ICC, as they continue to work to strengthen the Court as an independent institution.

The United States' enduring commitment to justice and accountability for atrocity crimes is deeply embedded in our history, our values, and our policy. In remarking recently upon the importance of accountability, President Biden reflected on the historic Nuremberg Tribunal.

He said, and I quote:

The Tribunal was unlike anything that ever came before. It was not about vengeance. It was about accountability. For only acknowledging the truth can we prevent the repetition of atrocities — which are happening now in other parts

of the world. It elevated our conception of the rule of law [...] set a marker for the future of justice, [and] uplifted the importance of human rights in international affairs.

The ICC was intended to carry forth those principles. As a court of last resort, it is part of a global system of justice that the U.S. supports.

In the spirit of cooperation, the United States is exploring ways to assist the Court's prosecutions, and we are already taking action in several areas, such as:

- Using the State Department War Crimes Rewards Program to offer up to \$5 million for information leading to the arrest of designated individuals subject to ICC warrants, including the leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, Joseph Kony—and I'm pleased to announce that we have just launched a new campaign about this reward;
- Exploring opportunities with national authorities and the ICC in locating and apprehending fugitives;
- Facilitating the travel of witnesses to The Hague to provide testimony to the Court; and
- Ongoing diplomatic engagement in support of the Court's work, including our recent statements at the UN General Assembly Annual Debate on the ICC and at the UN Security Council.

In addition, and in line with the principle of complementarity that underpins the Rome Statute, the United States continues to press forward on a broad range of efforts to support justice initiatives globally. These efforts include supporting – through funding, training, and information sharing – specialized national and regional courts, war crimes units, and international investigative mechanisms for atrocity crimes including, for example, in Kosovo, the Central African Republic, Ukraine, and Iraq.

The United States looks forward to engaging with you all this week to further explore ways in which we can work with ASP members to deliver justice for survivors and victims of atrocity crimes.