



REMARKS BY MRS PIERINA KATONAGA
PERMANENT MISSION OF SAMOA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT DAY OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE
MARKING THE TENTH ANNIEVRSARY OF THE RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT AND UNITED NATIONS
17 JULY 2014

President Song
Madame President of the Assembly of States Parties
Mr. Secretary-General,
Under Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Samoa is privileged to be part of today's commemorative occasion. On this date, we began a journey of shared beliefs which launched the International Criminal Court that embodies principles that we hold dear and close to our hearts. The court has become a beacon of hope for the victims of serious crimes under international law. To many it is the only refuge that shields and protects them against the perpetration of grievous crimes against humanity and the impunity of its perpetrators.

Samoa regards the International Criminal Court as a central part of the architecture of world peace based on the rule of law. The institutionalization of the court was a major achievement in the protection of human rights and in upholding international humanitarian standards.

This year we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the Court. To this end, we acknowledge the efforts of those who work ceaselessly to strengthen and make this relationship genuine and durable. We acknowledge with appreciation the work of the Judges, Prosecutor, Registrar and the excellent support of the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties.

Excellencies

As a small island state, Samoa continues to place great faith in the rule of law and the vital protection that the law offers to all states, especially to the weak and small. Our vulnerability extends to the dangers of instability arising from criminal activity. The impact of small arms and terrorism can be catastrophic for our small societies.

It is our keen awareness of this vulnerability that sustains our commitment to the principles of the rule of law. It is what underpins our commitment to the Rome Statute, the Kampala Amendments, and other humanitarian and disarmament treaties. For Samoa, there can be no other choice.

Excellencies

Today must serve as a day of hope. The message that "Justice Matters" must resonate well in to the future and beyond the UN Headquarters in to the four corners of the world. Our messages of celebration will only have meaning if they are implemented to demonstrate that "Justice does matter".

Excellencies

Samoa is confident that the commitment which has brought us this far will ensure that the principles of the Rome Statute and the joint work of the Court and the United Nations will be commemorated for many more years to come.

I thank you for your attention.