

Statement of the Delegation of the Federative Republic of Brazil
To the VII Session of the Assembly of States Parties
To the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
(The Hague, 14 November 2008)

Mr. President,

May I begin by congratulating you on your leadership. I would also like to congratulate the other Members of the Bureau and the facilitators on their intersessional work and on the preparation of the current Session. I wish to express appreciation for the statement made by Judge Philippe Kirsch, President of the Court.

Mr. President,

It has been a long and arduous journey since the adoption, in 1998, of the Rome Statute of the Court. Today, 108 States are gathered around the principle that impunity must not remain unchecked and that a system of international justice is not only possible, but necessary.

On the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute, the Court is at the centre of a historical transformation in the very nature of international relations, as well as in unique position to influence it. But it cannot perform such a role without the support of States Parties.

The principle of complementarity makes interdependence between the Court and States a vital requirement. States Parties must not refrain from cooperating with the Court, within the scope allowed by the Statute. Without the permanent support of States Parties, the Court cannot discharge its duties. This has to be understood and accepted by all.

Time has come for us to move forward in this issue, so as to pave the way to the Review Conference of the Rome Statute. I commend the delegations engaged in the Special Working Group on their commitment to advance the cause. And, specially, I commend you, Mr. President, on the able leadership with which you have managed to gather valuable basis for further negotiations.

Mr. President,

The work of the Court still requires improvements, which should be guided by the principle of due process of law, in order to guarantee full compliance with the international law of Human Rights. Therefore, as principles closely related to due process, legal aid, witnesses protection and victims assistance constitute institutional challenges. They encompass the responsibility of the Court to ensure that international criminal law meets the basic human rights standards.

Mr. President,

The pursuit of international justice and the fight against impunity are indispensable for the achievement of lasting peace and security. Individuals who perpetrate crimes against mankind must be sure of their punishment. Victims must have no doubt that criminals will be brought to justice. The international community has taken memorable steps in this regard with the establishment of the International Criminal Court. It is now up to us, States Parties, as well as other countries, international and regional organizations and the civil society, to strengthen the Court.

My delegation hopes that this Seventh Session of the Assembly of States Parties will contribute to the further consolidation of the Court. Brazil is ready to do its part in that endeavor.

Thank you, Mr. President.