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**SIXTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES
TO THE ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

New York, 30 November - 14 December 2007

General Debate

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. John Mourikis
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations**

**NEW YORK
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Mr. President,

I would like, first of all, to align myself fully with the statement made yesterday by Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. President,

Last year we made a statement before this Assembly in The Hague in which we expressed our assessment of the Court's work until that time and gave some indications as to how we perceived the way forward. This year we can all see that there are facts which prove the progress achieved in the development of the Court's work. Other facts, or lack thereof, however, have failed to fulfill our expectations.

It is fair to say, however, that the former facts far outnumber the latter. Let me briefly elaborate on this.

There has been considerable extension of the cases which are being dealt with by the Court. Arrest warrants have been issued for the situation in Darfur. An arrest warrant has been executed and a second accused is awaiting trial. New investigations have started and others are expected to start. The Court is moving ahead.

The issue of permanent premises is also progressing towards a resolution. New members have adhered to the Statute raising hopes that universality is in sight. All those are definite signs of progress. This is very encouraging to all of us.

However, there are still burning questions to be addressed and resolved. The most urgent among those is undoubtedly the continued non-execution of arrest warrants. This is not a purely procedural matter. It goes to the very heart of the issue of the international criminal justice in general and the *raison d'être* of the ICC in particular.

Which brings me to the issue of cooperation which, as already pointed out repeatedly by other speakers, is the only way to resolve the present stalemate.

Although the Court in general and the OTP in particular spare no effort to promote investigations, track down supporting networks, locate and neutralize the persons sought, it is obvious that this is not enough. The question concerns not only individual states which are, in practical terms, the prime addressees of the call but also the international community as a whole, including its prime executive arm, i.e. the Security Council.

The question of the relationship between peace and justice which we had the opportunity to address last year continues to be in the center of the debate concerning international criminal justice, but it seems to us that it is more and more accepted that there is no real antagonism between the two and what has to be addressed is modalities and procedures.

The situation as outlined above, with the progress record being to a large extent satisfactory, leaves room for looking with optimism into the future, especially in view of the Review Conference which will take place most probably in 2010.

It is clear from the ongoing negotiations within the Special Working Group on the crime of aggression, ably steered by its Chairman, Ambassador Wenaweser, that there is a distinct possibility for a positive outcome on the whole issue. Stepping up efforts to the maximum until that time is, therefore, of essence.

Concerning the question of the venue for the Conference, we are open to the existing or any future suggestions. However, we believe that the venue of the Review Conference should signal the universal character of the Court.

Mr. President,

The commitment and support of my country to the ICC is undiminished and vigorous. We are ready to provide the Court all the assistance required within our capabilities. In this spirit, we have contributed again to the Trust Fund for the participation of the least developed states in the ASP.

Mr. President,

It is our strong belief that the ICC having broken new ground in international criminal law, is already making its presence felt in the world scene. Let us make every effort to make that presence even more assertive and confident.

Thank you.