

**Twenty-first session**

International Criminal Court

Assembly of States Parties

5 – 10 December 2020

**Sixth meeting**

**7 December 2022**

**Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute system: Progress on the review process and next steps**

**Remarks by the President of the Assembly**

Distinguished representatives,

As you all know, this is a priority topic of Assembly of State Parties and indeed a crucial exercise to strengthen the Rome Statute system. Since their appointment by the Bureau on 5 February 2021, the members of the Review Mechanism, together with the working groups, the Assembly mandate holders and the Court, have been working very intensively on the assessment and implementation of the Independent Expert Review recommendations. This Assembly session is an opportune moment for us to take stock of where we stand with the exercise, what has been achieved this year, and what still needs to be done before its conclusion next year.

The work of the Mechanism is a very complex and meticulous exercise. With input from the Assembly mandate holders, they have successfully submitted their mid-term report and final reports this year. The reports serve as a useful guide and update on this multifaceted review process, and enable it to move forward. The work presented by the Review Mechanism provides excellent momentum for the strengthening of the ICC and the system as a whole.

During its mandate, the Review Mechanism has periodically updated the Bureau on its progress. For its part, the Bureau has also participated in this endeavour by implementing the recommendations assigned to it directly.

To this effect, the Bureau has proposed a mechanism to ensure an appropriate concerted response against any threat or attack against the Court, its officials and those cooperating with it, which has the potential to undermine the integrity, effectiveness, or impartiality of the Court.

The Secretariat of the Assembly has prepared a compilation of potential measures to be taken to counter such threats or attacks, based on submissions made by States Parties and civil society, to be added to the mechanism.

As indicated by the independent experts and as recognized in the compilation, pre-emptively conduct public activities is extremely important to inform relevant stakeholders and the public about the Court and to promote its work.

Distinguished representatives,

With the upcoming twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute next year, we will have the opportunity to give additional visibility to the Rome Statute system and discuss the strategic vision for the next ten years, as recommended by the Independent Experts. For the commemoration of this auspicious milestone, the Bureau proposes that the Assembly entrust it with the organization of a commemoration process to start in New York at the beginning of July 2023.

As envisioned, the events in New York would also include a treaty ceremony, with the aim of encouraging States to ratify the Rome Statute and its amendments, and to sign voluntary cooperation agreements with the Court.

I urge States Parties and relevant actors to take advantage of this very special anniversary to engage and promote these events, and to organize their own commemorations at the national, regional, and international levels.

Distinguished representatives,

While the assessment of some recommendations is still pending, I understand that many more have already been implemented, or are in the process of being implemented. This is a work in progress, but a great deal of progress has already been made.

I would like to thank and commend the Review Mechanism, but in particular the State Party representatives, Ambassador Kanu and Ambassador van den IJssel, for having deployed great efforts

throughout the process to carry out their mandate in such an effective, detailed, but also inclusive and transparent, manner.

I would also like to commend the Court for its proactive approach to these recommendations. I would also like to recall that it is not only the Court that the Assembly must also actively play a role in this process, as some recommendations are addressed to the Assembly.

Let me conclude by thanking all stakeholders for having participated in this very complex exercise to bring about a stronger ICC. I encourage to continue doing so in the future until the completion of the entire review. Some of the recommendations still need to be implemented and some of the issues are indeed permanent challenges for the system that will always require our attention beyond the Review, such as the improvement of performance of all components of the system or the work culture.

I truly trust that the work already done will better equip us to address effectively the great challenges ahead.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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