

Twentieth-first Session of the
Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the
International Criminal Court

S T A T E M E N T

BY

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Madam President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to the President of the Assembly, the President of the Court and the Prosecutor for their efforts over the past year.

Special thanks go to the outgoing Registrar, Mr. Peter Lewis, for his excellent work during a difficult period.

The task for Mr. Lewis's successor will be no easier.

And whoever they may be, I hope that he or she will manage the Court's operations with equal efficiency, while enjoying the trust and support of the States Parties.

Madam President,

Hopes placed in the International Criminal Court have never been so high.

Certainly, that is the case for Poland, and I believe it applies to the rest of the world as well.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has unleashed the first full-scale war on the European continent since World War II, with atrocities being committed on a vast scale.

As Ukraine's neighbour, Poland feels the war's horrors and their effects on its victims with a special intensity.

If the declaration in the Rome Statute preamble that "*the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole must not go unpunished*" is not meant to be an empty vow, now is the time for the ICC to act – swiftly, efficiently, and tangibly.

Poland will continue by various means and at various levels to support the Tribunal and the Office of the Prosecutor.

But like other States Parties, we expect results.

Distinguished Delegates,

Justice is due to all victims of conflicts which the ICC deals with, no matter where they occur.

The Court's current investigations cover practically every region in the world.

This is a desired development and a source of satisfaction for States Parties.

However, for the Court to be truly universal, to be able to prosecute international crimes committed by any person in any place, the universal ratification of the Rome Statute by all States is needed.

We should strive for such an optimal solution.

For only then will the system of international justice based on the Rome Statute become airtight and effective.

I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to all States that have not yet done so to become Party to the Statute.

Madam President,

The growing volume of investigations and trials requires even more resources.

This comes at a time of economic crisis, when the finances of most governments are deteriorating.

Even so, I hope that during this year's session, the States Parties will be able to agree on a budget that allows the Court to cope with its heavy caseload.

Madam President,

Let me conclude by calling on everyone to redouble their efforts to cooperate with and support the Court so that justice is done.

Justice is something the world needs now more than ever.

We still have a long road ahead before we achieve that aim.

But Poland believes we can get there, if we work together.

Thank you.