



STATEMENT BY AUSTRALIA
TO THE 21ST SESSION OF
THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO
THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
BY
MARIE-CHARLOTTE McKENNA
HEAD OF DELEGATION

Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System

Chair, honourable Ministers, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Three years have passed since this Assembly launched, by consensus, a State-driven process to review the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System. Australia is committed to strengthening and supporting the Court. That is why we remain focused on the implementation of the Court's reform priorities – to ensure that the Court is optimally placed to deliver its important mandate now, and into the future.

We commend the Review Mechanism on its leadership and on the progress made over the year. We are pleased that many of the Independent Expert Review recommendations have now been positively assessed and are progressing through implementation. We also commend the Court's continued constructive engagement in the review process.

But there is still much work to be done. Current resource and workload pressures underscore the urgency of reforms to make the Court more efficient, and more effective. The coming year presents us with an opportunity to redouble our efforts and to progress the implementation of these recommendations with renewed vigour and pragmatism.

A key priority for Australia is strengthening the alignment of the Court's resources and strategic direction with its core mandate as a court of last resort. We look forward to the Office of the Prosecutor releasing its report on complementarity. As co-focal points on the complementarity facilitation with Uganda, Australia welcomes the continued engagement of the Court, State Parties and civil society on this topic. We look forward to continuing our discussions on complementarity-related recommendations in 2023.

Australia also considers reforms to the Court's workplace culture, gender and geographic representation and arrears policy as key priorities.

We thank the Court for its efforts and the progress made to date to improve the Court's workplace culture. As we know, achieving cultural change does not happen overnight and entrenching it is an ongoing endeavour. We must continue to work towards this objective and evaluate the effectiveness of steps taken. This is crucial to ensuring the Court's operational effectiveness.

Whilst we focus on implementing these reforms for the Court of today, we must also have an eye to the Court of the future. We thank the Review Mechanism for facilitating consideration this year of the development of a ten-year strategic vision for the Court. Australia continues to support the development of this vision as a crucial investment in the future of the Court. A strategic, pragmatic and principled vision is crucial to navigating the new challenges the future will bring. Any discussion must be underpinned by significant progress made by the Court and the Assembly in implementing reform.

Chair, as a long-standing supporter of the Court, Australia remains committed to working in partnership with the Court and States Parties in 2023 to promote reform to strengthen and support the Court in delivering accountability now and into the future.