

Statement by Japan
Plenary Meeting on Review Mechanism

Thank you, Ambassador Van den IJssel and Ambassador Kanu, for facilitating today's meeting, as well as the discussions at the Hague WG this year. I would like to briefly make two points that Japan believes are particularly important in relation to the Review Mechanism.

The first is the introduction of a tenure policy applicable to some ICC officials. In order to vitalize the organization, it is necessary to adopt a tenure system. As you reported on the first day of the ASP meeting, States Parties positively assessed the relevant IER recommendation at the meeting in June. That is to say, States Parties agreed to introduce a tenure policy.

From this point forward, it is important to proceed with substantive and constructive discussions on the design of a tenure system, such as the duration of the term and the permissibility of exceptions, and to introduce the system at the earliest possible time. It is therefore very opportune for the ASP to adopt a draft resolution before us at this session. Given the importance of this subject, Japan would like to request you to allocate sufficient time for discussion on the design of the new system next year.

The second is improvement of the work environment. The IOM evaluation report on the workplace culture in the judiciary contains informative findings, some of which were shocking, to be frank. There must be no bullying or harassment or abuse of authorities at the ICC, which is an institution dedicated to achieving justice. Such behavior would instantly extinguish the international community's expectations of the ICC. And it is a disservice to the efforts of many staff members who are diligently engaged in their duties .

Japan highly appreciates President Hofmański's leadership and the active involvement of many judges and staff members in producing the IOM report. We also commend the revision of the Code of Judicial Ethics in October as a positive step forward.

However, preparation of the report and the revision of the Code are not ends in themselves. It is imperative to improve the work environment on a factual basis. We should continue to pay particular attention to this matter in the review of the ICC, and would like to ask the State Party representatives and focal points to keep this in mind when considering the work programme for the coming year.