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Registrar of the International Criminal Court

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Plenary Session on Cooperation

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Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I have great pleasure in addressing you today at this plenary session. As it is traditionally depicted, cooperation embodies one of the two main pillars of the Court. It is also a key role of the Registry, something which is perhaps less well-known. For example, between September 2022 and September 2023, the Registry issued 301 requests for assistance. What is not obvious from this figure is that each request only forms the beginning of dialogue with the requested state and that full implementation requires expertise, resources and continued engagement by the Court.

In addition, we must also take into account the new parameters with which the Court is working and which will have an impact on cooperation. By this I mean the fact that the geographical areas in which we operate are expanding, which is going to force our teams to familiarise themselves with hugely different legal regimes. I am also referring to the new threats facing the Court and the fact that we are now working in war zones. This leads the Court to seek new forms of cooperation associated with security obligations. For example, France is assisting us by hosting our medical staff for training delivered by the Ministry of Defence, and Belgium has agreed to assist us by storing certain weapons on its territory.

In this regard I am aware of the fundamental shift in international relations and the need for the Court to be better equipped to understand the context in which States are asked to cooperate.

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Another aspect to take into consideration is that support for judicial cooperation involving the Registry strengthens judicial cooperation within the Court as a whole. The Registry makes its resources for legal cooperation and its expertise available to Chambers and the Presidency in the context of enforcing requests to freeze assets, for example. It also works in conjunction with the Office of the Prosecutor on joint projects which require the support of States and provides support to counsel by forwarding their requests for cooperation, namely as part of their investigative work.

[Remainder in English]