

Statement of Finland

**Twenty-second Session of the Assembly of States Parties
to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
General Debate**

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– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Madame President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finland aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by Spain on behalf of the European Union.

This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Rome Statute. As the Statute has reached maturity, the Court today is involved in the full scope of activities envisaged in the legal instrument laying the ground for its activities.

The ICC has become a central institution in the rule-based international order. It remains an important avenue to access justice, assistance and reparation to thousands of victims and survivors around our World. Finland is a long-standing supporter of the ICC Trust Fund for Victims. Restorative justice remains a key feature of the Rome Statute System.

The review process and the implementation of approved recommendations provide an opportunity to further strengthen the Rome Statute system and ensure it is fit to face the next quarter of a century.

Madame President,

Nearly two-thirds of all UN Member States are also States Parties to the Rome Statute. Finland warmly welcomes Armenia to this family, and hopes other States will follow its example. Universality of the Rome Statute remains a central goal.

Widest accountability gaps remain in situations where atrocity crimes take place, but the ICC lacks jurisdiction. In other situations, the ICC has jurisdiction, but lacks access. We see the undeniable benefits of full access in the expeditious manner the work in the situation in Ukraine is progressing. We welcome the recent visit of Prosecutor Khan in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian territories. Regardless of the level of cooperation, it is vital to advance the work in all situations.

Finland urges all States, whether States Parties or not, to cooperate with the Court. To allow access, to share information, to execute arrest warrants. We in this Assembly have a legal obligation to follow the rules on cooperation enshrined in the Rome Statute. Finland stands ready to do its part.

Madame President,

Any threats or attacks against the Court, its personnel or those cooperating with it are unacceptable. Finland condemns the criminal proceedings initiated by the

authorities of the Russian Federation against the Prosecutor, the President and other judges of the Court. The recent unprecedented cyber-attack on the Court highlights the urgent need to protect the ICC and invest more in its security. Finland has always underscored that the Court should have adequate Regular Budget resources to cover its mandated activities.

Civil society and human rights defenders are often the first to alert States and the ICC of serious violations of international law, wherever they take place. This cooperation is not without risk. Finland warmly welcomes the newly adopted guidelines on the protection of those participating in the Assembly. The Assembly must remain a safe space for all.

Madame President,

Before closing, allow me to express our gratitude to all States Parties for their support in the election of Ambassador Päivi Kaukoranta as the next President of the Assembly of States Parties. Ambassador Kaukoranta has a long history of working closely with the ICC, stemming back to the negotiations leading up to the Rome Statute. I am confident that under her leadership, and that of the two Vice-Presidents and the bureau, this Assembly is in good hands.

I thank you.