

# IRELAND

Statement by H.E. Brendan Rogers

Ambassador of Ireland to the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Permanent  
Representative of Ireland to the International Criminal Court

at the Twenty-Second Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome  
Statute of the International Criminal Court, The Hague, 04-14 December 2021



*Check Against Delivery*

Madam President,

Ireland associates itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

I wish to begin by expressing Ireland's gratitude to you, Madam President, for your personal commitment and integrity throughout your Presidency. Your dedication to the mission of the International Criminal Court has been exemplary, not just over these past three years, but for more than a decade. I was privileged to witness your commitment to victims, last year, when you joined the field mission to Northern Uganda organised by the Trust Fund for Victims and Ireland.

We also take the opportunity to thank the outgoing judges for their service and important contributions. In particular, we are grateful to the outgoing President, Judge Piotr Hofmanski, whose leadership of the Court through many challenges has been a great source of stability.

We now welcome the election of six new judges, who will undoubtedly make a significant contribution to the success of the Rome Statute system over the coming years. We offer them our utmost support as they bring their experience and skill to bear on the work of the Court at this critical time. Let me also congratulate and welcome the incoming President of the ASP, Ambassador Paivi

Kaukoranta. We look forward to working with you over the next three years.

And I must also welcome our Registrar Osvaldo Zavala Giler to his first Assembly since he assumed his role in April this year. He has already risen to the many challenges that have confronted the Court these last few months and we have every confidence in his continued stewardship of the Registry.

Madam President,

This past year has been a significant one for the ICC in many ways. Only five months ago, many of us were gathered here at UN headquarters to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute. We reaffirmed our support for the Court and reflected upon how far the ICC has progressed its vital mandate to end impunity and ensure justice for the victims of the most serious crimes of international concern. Despite having to negotiate the inevitable growing pains inherent in such an ambitious project, the ICC has matured into the cornerstone of the international system of justice.

The progress achieved by the Court in implementing its mandate is evident in the recent expansion of its workload, both at its headquarters in The Hague, and its investigations in the field. Since 2021 the Prosecutor has opened or resumed investigations in four situations – Palestine, the Philippines, Venezuela and Ukraine – and

this work continues. A high number of cases are reaching trial stage and there have been a number of appeals judgments and reparations proceedings. The ability of the Court to pursue its mandate consistently across all its situations, without fear or favour, is fundamental to its continued legitimacy in the eyes of victims and the international community. That requires adequate resourcing.

Madam President,

Sadly, the Court's recent pursuit of its mandate has drawn the ire of certain states not parties to the Statute and by powerful individuals who are threatened by denial of impunity. Ireland condemns the proliferation of threats against the ICC, its staff and those who cooperate with the Court. We are extremely concerned by the recent cyber security incident as well as the criminal proceedings against ICC judges and the Prosecutor initiated by Russia. These acts are attacks against the independence and impartiality of the Court, and are an affront to the rule of law. It is important that States Parties publically defend and support the Court with respect to its work in all situations, including those situations where it may not be politically convenient to do so.

But the Court needs more than political support in these challenging times. Crucially, it needs sufficient resources to operate efficiently and effectively. Ireland urges all States Parties at this Assembly to

agree a budget that will ensure that all situations before the Court receive the resources that victims deserve, that will enable the Court to withstand the security threats it is facing and to ensure that it has the capacity to apply its mandate consistently. We consider the proper resourcing of the Court to be of the utmost importance.

Madam President,

Victims have been at the heart of the Rome Statute system from the very beginning. Nowhere is this more evident than in the invaluable work of the Trust Fund for Victims. Ireland has been a consistent annual contributor to the Trust Fund, contributing over €3.3 million to date. We continue to encourage States Parties, that have not yet contributed to the Fund, to consider doing so in future.

We reiterate our strong commitment to the universality of the Rome Statute. I would therefore like to welcome the fact that Armenia has very recently ratified the Statute, and will very soon become the 124<sup>th</sup> member of this assembly. If we wish to achieve a truly universal system of international criminal justice, one that leaves no gaps for impunity, it is essential that the Court has as wide and diverse a membership as possible.

Thank you Madam President.