



**New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations  
Te Aka Aorere**

**22nd Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome  
Statute of the International Criminal Court**

**New Zealand General Debate Statement**

**New Zealand Statement delivered by  
Deputy Head of Mission New Zealand Embassy, The Hague  
Hannah Frost**

6 December 2023

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**



Madame President

New Zealand considers the Court to be a central pillar in the international rules-based order and the international criminal justice system. Twenty five years after it was established by the Rome Statute, we commend the significant progress made in both delivering justice for victims, and accountability for perpetrators of some of the most serious crimes of international concern.

We note the substantial investigatory work the Court has accomplished this year concerning conflicts and alleged crimes across four continents. I especially acknowledge the role that the Office of the Prosecutor, the Judges and the Registry of the International Criminal Court play in this work, working in partnership with States Parties.

We would start by acknowledging **the Prosecutor, the Deputy Prosecutors and their teams for the dedicated work and service to the Court** and its mandate. This work includes arrest warrants for President Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova for the alleged war crimes of unlawful deportation and unlawful transfer of children from Ukraine. Their work further includes the Court's work in Northern Uganda, Darfur, Mali and the Central African Republic. We also note the open and ongoing investigation on the Situation in Palestine. New Zealand recognises that the ICC has jurisdiction over alleged war crimes committed since 13 June 2014 in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, as well as with respect to crimes committed by nationals of States Parties. As the Prosecutor has noted, the investigation includes the attacks that took place on 7 October 2023 and the subsequent escalation of hostilities and violence.

We welcome the election of **six new judges** this year. These choices reflect States Parties' shared commitment to ensuring gender balance and geographical diversity on the bench. We are confident all those elected will continue the Court's work in holding to account individuals responsible for the most serious international crimes and will support the overall good-functioning of the Court.

The cooperation, assistance and support of all **States** remains essential to the Court's operations and fulfilment of its independent and impartial mandate. States Parties and others must provide the necessary cooperation and assistance to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community by facilitating their arrest and surrender to the Court. We also call on all countries who have not yet done so to **ratify or accede to the Rome Statute**.

Madame President, New Zealand supports a well-run court. We thank **the Registrar and**

**his team** for their work to ensure all pillars of the Court have the support they need to do their work.

New Zealand remains focussed on ensuring the Court is sufficiently resourced to enable it to continue undertaking its investigations and prosecutions independently and impartially. We support a **regular budget that is reasonable, justified and fiscally responsible**. We thank the Committee of Budget and Finance for its guidance in the lead up to this years' Assembly of State Parties.

Madame President, New Zealand is concerned about the number of **direct threats facing the Court**. It is unacceptable that arrest warrants have been issued for elected officials and personnel of the Court. It is also unacceptable for certain actors to compromise the security of the information systems of the Court. Notwithstanding these efforts, we trust the Court will not be deterred from pursuing its vital mandate.

New Zealand acknowledges the important work of the Trust Fund for Victims. We commend the Fund for its efforts this year, delivering a **real and meaningful sense of justice to thousands of victims, their families and communities**. We were pleased to provide additional voluntary funding to the TFV. We encourage other States to consider supporting the Trust Fund through a reasonable regular budget and through voluntary contributions. Separately, New Zealand also takes this opportunity to note our support to continued discussions around **serious environmental damage** and destruction at a global level.

Finally, New Zealand looks forward to becoming a member of the **Bureau** in 2024 and serving all States Parties in this capacity for the coming three years.

Thank you Madame President.