

## **Statement on Cooperation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

Excellencies, colleagues, Without effective and strong cooperation, the Court simply cannot operate. With hundreds of witnesses appearing before the Court each year, it is vital that there are safe havens available for them. For without this, there simply can be no trials *or* justice served.

Without the key support of States Parties in the execution of arrest warrants the Court is unable to fulfil its mandate. For the effective functioning of the Court it is also important that voluntary cooperation agreements such as release, and enforcement of sentences agreements are signed.

With the upcoming conclusion of two further trials, we have to come together to support the Court, and share this burden equally. In this regard, we welcome Poland's signing of an enforcement agreement at this ASP.

We as Host State stand firmly behind the Court, and work tirelessly every day to support the operation of the Court – by amongst others facilitating detention, supporting the security of the Court's premises, and facilitating the entry of witnesses.

To ensure that the Court can continue to fulfil its mandate in this unprecedented climate of external threats, it is essential that States Parties strengthen their support for the Court. States Parties too, need to be able to cooperate with the Court freely, without interference from 3<sup>rd</sup> parties.

On a national level as well, the investigation and prosecution of the core international crimes is of vital importance to victims *and* to ease the burden on the Court. Joint initiatives such as the 2023 Ljubljana- the Hague Convention, on mutual legal assistance - and extradition, are key examples of what we can achieve if we work together. We urge other States Parties to consider ratifying the Convention as well.

I thank you.