



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT

BY

MR. GEORGE SHADRACK KAMANDA

FIRST SECRETARY

**AT THE TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES
PARTIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

**Under the Agenda Item:
Plenary on “Cooperation”**

**World Forum, The Hague,
The Netherlands
5 December 2024**

(Please check against delivery)

**Madam President,
Co-Facilitators,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. Sierra Leone attaches great importance to the obligation to Cooperate with the International Criminal Court by States Parties to Rome Statute. We are convinced that **cooperation** is the cornerstone of the Court's effectiveness and outreach. Without the full and unreserved cooperation and support of States Parties, the Court cannot fulfill its mandate to ensure **justice for victims and end impunity**. In this regard, my delegation commends the Bureau's Working Group on Cooperation and welcomes ongoing efforts, including to address persistent challenges, particularly on non-cooperation.
2. We acknowledge the significant strides made by the Court during **the reporting period** in fostering cooperation through the creation of the Judicial Cooperation Support Section (JCSS) and the development of innovative strategies by the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP). These efforts, including the new

Policy on Complementarity and Cooperation and the establishment of the Tracking and Information Fusion Section, reflect the Court's commitment to addressing operational challenges and strengthening the Rome Statute system. We commend these proactive steps as they enhance the Court's ability to execute arrest warrants, recover assets, and relocate witnesses.

3. **Cooperation must be practical and consistent**, including executing arrest warrants, protecting the Court's personnel, and safeguarding its operations. However, as highlighted in the Assembly's report, non-cooperation remains a **significant obstacle**, seen in the failure to execute arrest warrants, delays in sharing information, and gaps in the assistance needed for investigations and prosecutions. These issues undermine the Rome Statute system and the credibility of international justice. Sierra Leone, as one of the Focal Points on non-cooperation alongside **Mexico, Poland, and Vanuatu**, takes this opportunity to urge all States Parties to fulfil their obligations under the Rome Statute and engage constructively to address issues of non-compliance.

4. Sierra Leone recognizes the vital role of **regional and international partnerships** in enhancing ICC cooperation. We urge the Court to expand its engagement with regional organizations, civil society, and **States not party to the Rome Statute**, fostering practical solutions to address non-cooperation issues with the Court. Such partnerships are critical not only for securing arrests and evidence but also for ensuring that justice reaches victims who have waited too long for accountability.

5. In closing, as we reflect on **progress and challenges in this reporting period**, Sierra Leone reaffirms its steadfast support for the Court as a beacon of justice and accountability. **Cooperation is not just a procedural requirement; it is the lifeline** that ensures justice for victims and reinforces global efforts to end impunity. We call on this Assembly to collectively recommit to the principles of the Rome Statute and take tangible steps to ensure that justice and accountability remain at the forefront of our shared goals.

I thank you.