



**Statement on behalf of the Republic of Bulgaria**  
**At the**  
**Twenty-third Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome**  
**Statute of the International Criminal Court**  
**(The Hague, 2-7 December 2024)**

*To be delivered by H.E. Mr. Konstantin Dimitrov,  
Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Kingdom of The Netherlands*

**Madam President,**  
**Distinguished members of the Court,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Republic of Bulgaria fully aligns itself with the Statement delivered by the representative of Hungary on behalf of the European Union and would like to provide some additional remarks in its national capacity.

I would like to begin by congratulating President Tomoko Akane, the Vice-Presidents, and the new President of the Assembly of State Parties, Ms. Päivi Kaukoranta, on their appointment. We would also like to congratulate the judges, elected during the last session of this Assembly.

Bulgaria supports the Court's contributions to promoting the rule of law. ICC is a central pillar in the international rules-based order and the international criminal justice system. The role of the International Criminal Court is more important than ever now, when the basic principles of international law are often disregarded.

The significant increase in the judicial and investigative activities of the Court in the past year confirms the need for accountability around the world and the relevance of the ICC. It is crucial that the independence of the Court is fully respected and its integrity is preserved from intimidation and pressure against the juridical institution, its officials and those cooperating with it. Earlier this year, more than 90 States-Parties, including the Republic of Bulgaria, issued a joint Statement in support of the independence and impartiality of the ICC.

Considering the Court's crucial role in the fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes, Bulgaria believes that the Court must remain true to its mandate to safeguard its legitimacy, ensure its effectiveness and guarantee fair and impartial proceedings. We firmly oppose any attempt for the instrumentalization and the politization of the Court.

We express our great concern in regard to the attacks and threats against the Court, elected officials, personnel and those cooperating with the ICC. The ability of the International Criminal Court to fulfil its mandate consistently in all situations is fundamental to its continued legitimacy.

The ICC remains a Court of last resort. Complementarity of jurisdiction is at the core of ICC's mandate and States have the primary responsibility to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of atrocity crimes.

Without support and cooperation from the States Parties, the Court won't be able to overcome the challenges it faces nor to tackle impunity. We welcome Armenia's recent ratification of the Rome Statute and Ukraine's deposition of its instrument of ratification at the end of October. The universalization of the Rome Statute remains a critical factor in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes.

Taking into consideration the continuous increase in the workload of the Court, adequate budget resources are crucial for the proper functioning of the Court. We join others in calling upon States in arrears to settle their outstanding contributions.

We commend the progress made in the Review Process of the Rome Statute system and we encourage the ICC and States Parties to continue engaging in the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Expert Review.

Victims of international crimes all around the world turn to the ICC as their best and often last hope for justice and redress. Bulgaria supports the focus on victims' rights and participation promoted by the Court. We were pleased to provide additional voluntary funding to the Trust Fund for Victims.

**Madam President,**

Now, as the international rules-based order is increasingly challenged, the International Criminal Court remains a beacon of hope for maintaining the rule of law.

By holding the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community accountable, not only does the Court deliver justice, but it also contributes to achieving sustainable peace.

I thank you!