

# IRELAND

Statement by H.E. Ann Derwin

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

at the Twenty-Third Session of the Assembly of States Parties  
to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, The  
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*Check Against Delivery*

Madam President,

Ireland associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, I must express Ireland's gratitude to the officials at the Court and the Presidency of the Assembly for their tireless work in increasingly difficult circumstances. I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on the completion of your first year as ASP President, as well as the judges who have taken up their roles this year.

Ireland notes that the Court's considerable workload has continued throughout 2024. Notable progress has been made both in the courtroom and across its investigative activities. This activity is both a sign of a maturing Court and of the increased demand for global justice. The ICC can count on Ireland's steadfast support as it continues to pursue its important mandate.

Madam President,

It cannot be denied that the challenges we face are daunting.

Over the last number of years, the Court has been subjected to many threats and attacks – from cyber security incidents to intimidation of elected officials. Now, we once more face the threat of sanctions against the Court, having potentially devastating impacts on the operations of the Court. Ireland categorically condemns any attempt to interfere with the work of the Court as an attack against the international rule of law. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the Court and underline our confidence in it.

As States Parties, each of us has consciously assumed the mantle of guardian of the Rome Statute - this is *our* Court. It is incumbent upon us to support the ICC even when it may be politically inconvenient for us to do so. A key aspect of this support is carrying out our obligations to cooperate with the Court, in accordance with the Statute. Without such cooperation, the Court will essentially cease to function.

Justice is not an *à la carte* menu. We cannot support some investigations, and then publicly condemn others. We cannot choose to adhere to our obligations under the Rome Statute when it suits us, and ignore them when it does not.

We cannot claim to care about victims and then invite perpetrators into our house.

Madam President,

If the Court is to deliver on the important mandate States Parties have bestowed upon it, we must ensure that it is sufficiently resourced. Ireland calls on the Assembly to agree a budget that is fit for purpose and enables the Court to both deliver justice for victims and navigate the current tumultuous environment it finds itself in. This is a key moment for the Court, and we must give it the resources it needs. In particular, we stress the importance of allocating sufficient resources to ensure the security of the Court and its officials.

A healthy work environment is essential for a well-functioning Court. The Court's staff work under increasing pressure at the coalface of international justice. They deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Any allegation of harassment, discrimination or abuse of authority must naturally be investigated promptly, independently and fairly, in line with the Court's zero-tolerance policy.

Madam President,

Real justice cannot be achieved without the meaningful participation of those most affected by the crimes being prosecuted. Victims are at the heart of the Rome Statute framework. Ireland commends the work of the Trust Fund for Victims in delivering tangible reparative justice to victims, their families and their communities. We wish the newly elected directors of the Trust Fund, including Ambassador Kevin Kelly of Ireland, the very best as they embark on their new terms.

Ireland has been a long-standing contributor to the Trust Fund for Victims. Today I am pleased to announce that Ireland will make a €750,000 voluntary contribution for the years 2025 to 2027. We encourage all States to consider supporting its work, especially as the need to fund reparation awards increases over the coming years.

Madam President,

Ireland looks forward to the Review Conference on the Crime of Aggression, which will be held in 2025. We encourage all States Parties to actively engage in the proposals for amending the crime of aggression. We consider this conference to be an opportunity to bring the ICC's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression into line with the other Rome Statute Crimes. The Review Conference is also an important platform to renew our commitment to the Rome Statute framework, and underline the importance of the ICC in the system of international criminal justice.

Despite the challenges the Court faces, we have reason to look towards the future with optimism. We see this in the recent growth in the Court's membership. This year we welcomed Armenia as the 124th State Party and we look forward to Ukraine becoming a full member of the Court next month. We hope that their efforts inspire more States to join the world's first permanent court to prosecute international crimes so that, together, we can end impunity for ever.

Thank you Madam President