

**ICC 23<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of States Parties**  
**The Hague, 2-7 December 2024**

**General Debate**

**Ms. Sesselja Sigurðardóttir, Director General,  
Legal Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland**

Madame President,

It is an honour to address this assembly today on behalf of the Government of Iceland, a proud State Party to the Rome Statute.

We convene this 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the Assembly at a time where armed conflict grows more rife, more intense and less humane. We face a world that is in grave danger of unravelling into the injustices of war which previous generations worked so hard to prevent. A world where adherence to international law and the rule of law is increasingly challenged. A world that needs the International Criminal Court as profoundly as ever – our court of last resort to prosecute the most serious of crimes.

Madame President,

In times such as these, we reflect back on the mandate we have undertaken as an international community. When the generations that witnessed the greatest horrors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century came together as the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

The establishment of a permanent international criminal court was always integral to that mandate. To deliver justice to the victims and communities harmed and put an end to impunity for those who commit atrocities under the veil of official immunities. To work in the interest of peace because without justice, there can be no lasting peace.

Madame President,

We must not forget what a remarkable achievement the establishment of the International Criminal Court was. The lessons we have learned in the 22 years since the Court began operations have emboldened our conviction of the importance of an independent and impartial International Criminal Court to advance and uphold international criminal justice.

The Government of Iceland is proud to have been among the first States to sign and ratify the Rome Statute and, in 2016, the Kampala Amendments on the Crime of Aggression. The international community must be able to redress this core international crime against the most fundamental principle of the UN Charter. We encourage States Parties to ratify the Kampala amendments as soon as possible. Russia's crime of aggression against Ukraine reminds us of

the pressing need for the International Criminal Court to be effectively able to exercise jurisdiction over this crime. Next year's Review Conference offers an opportunity to address the current limitations of the Kampala Amendments.

Madame President,

A year from now, when the Assembly reconvenes for its 24<sup>th</sup> session, we very possibly will be faced with an equally or even more challenging international situation.

The Court faces unprecedented threats from external actors for faithfully carrying out its mandate – a mandate it owes to the peoples of the world. This is deeply concerning. Such attacks or threats against the Court, its officials or those who work with it are unacceptable attempts at influencing independent investigations and impartial judicial proceedings. We thank the Court's officials and staff for their continuous hard work under these challenging circumstances.

I take this opportunity to reiterate Iceland's unwavering commitment to defend the principles enshrined in the Rome Statute and to the International Criminal Court. In these testing times, we must remain principled in our approach to the work of the Court.

We reaffirm our commitment to cooperate fully with the Court in its investigation and prosecution of the crimes within its jurisdiction. This is essential for the Court's ability to carry out its mandate. We therefore call upon all States Parties to cooperate with the Court in the interest of international criminal justice and of peace and security.

Madame President,

Victims are at the heart of the Rome Statute system. We commend the work of the Trust Fund for Victims, which plays essential role in ensuring reparations and assistance to thousands of victims. We continue to provide funding to the Trust Fund and call on States Parties and others to contribute to this important endeavour.

Finally, we take this opportunity to welcome Armenia as a new State Party and to commend Ukraine for recently depositing its instrument of ratification. We look forward to welcoming Ukraine as our 125<sup>th</sup> State Party as of 1 January 2025.

I thank you.