

Statement on behalf of the Republic of Lithuania
by
H.E. Mr. Neilas Tankevičius, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the
Republic of Lithuania to the Kingdom of the Netherlands
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Madame President of the Assembly,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. While aligning with the statement made by the European Union, I would like to address this Assembly in the national capacity.
2. I would like to join in congratulating the new President of this Assembly, Madame Päivi Kaukoranta, the newly elected President of the Court, Madame Tomoko Akane, and the newly elected judges. I wish them all the best.
3. Lithuania reiterates its continuous support for the International Criminal Court and its unwavering commitment to the values that the Court upholds and defends in the pursuit of justice. Lithuania's support also includes its additional voluntary contributions to the Special Fund for Security and the Trust Fund for Victims.
4. Preventing impunity is a critical element of the mission of the ICC. The Court works tirelessly to bring the perpetrators of the most serious international crimes to justice. This requires not only effective investigative mechanisms, the apprehension of suspects, the protection and relocation of victims, but also strict compliance by State Parties with their obligations under the Rome Statute, in particular, the obligation to cooperate with the Court, by thus, to arrest and surrender any suspect sought by the Court.
5. We regret that the certain State Party recently failed to arrest the Russian President Putin during his visit to its territory in early September this year. Such non-compliance directly hinders the efforts of the international community to ensure justice for the victims of Russian crimes in Ukraine and protects the perpetrator from accountability. It is far from satisfactory that many arrest warrants issued by the Court, including against Putin, have not yet been executed.
6. In this context, I urge all States Parties to refrain from unnecessary contacts with the persons subject to arrest warrants that could compromise the integrity of the Court. By maintaining a clear and principled stance, we can safeguard the independence and

impartiality of the Court and strengthen public confidence in its work and in justice as a whole.

7. I must also express our strong concern about the growing threat to the authority of the ICC. These threats, whether through political interference, intimidation, or the undermining of judicial independence, pose a grave danger to the ICC. It is crucial that all States stand firm against such pressures and protect the integrity of the Court's judicial processes.

Madam President, distinguished delegates,

8. This understanding that international crimes should not go unpunished encourages us to continuously strengthen the capacity of the International Criminal Court in exercising its jurisdiction, in particular, jurisdiction over the crime of aggression. Lithuania stresses the importance of reviewing the Kampala amendments in order to enable the Court to exercise the same jurisdiction over the crime of aggression as over the other three categories of international crimes (war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide).
9. Lithuania reaffirms the need for an effective Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, which must be empowered to deliver real justice for the crime of aggression committed by Russia's top political and military leadership. The establishment of the Tribunal must respect Ukraine's expectations and enjoy broad cross-regional support. This result comes due to tireless efforts and joint actions of the participants of the Core Group, in which Lithuania is actively engaged, and of the Council of Europe.
10. Lithuania's commitment to international justice is also illustrated by the recent referral of Lithuania to the ICC requesting the Prosecutor to investigate alleged crimes against humanity of deportation, persecution and other inhuman acts being carried out by senior Belarussian leaders against the civilian population of Belarus. Civilians from Belarus have been forcibly displaced into Lithuania and other States Parties as a result of Lukashenko's regime's crimes. We look forward other states facing the consequences of the forced deportation of the Lukashenko's regime as well as those concerned about the stability of the region, human rights and justice to joining us.
11. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Armenia as a new State Party to the Rome Statute as well as Ukraine for depositing its instrument of ratification and thus becoming 125th State Party to the ICC as of 1 January 2025. This is a strong and welcome step towards justice.

12. In conclusion, I urge all States Parties to remain committed to supporting the Court, in order to protect and enhance its independence, to promote universality and to defend the integrity of the Rome Statute as well as to comply with the obligations under the Statute.
13. We call upon all States not to abandon justice, but to build it firmly, not as a far-reaching idyll for someone, but as a close reality for all.

Thank you.