

General Debate Statement by Dr. HWANG Jun-shik
Director-General for International Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
the Republic of Korea
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Madam Vice President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my profound honor to address this Assembly on behalf of the Republic of Korea. I thank President Kaukoranta for her steadfast leadership during these challenging times, and also thank the judges and all personnel of the International Criminal Court for their unwavering dedication to justice.

The ICC embodies the international community's efforts to combat impunity. The Court has dealt with 33 cases to date, resulting in 13 convictions. Despite persistent challenges, the Court has significantly contributed to ensuring accountability for the most serious crimes of international concern and securing justice for victims.

The most recent cases demonstrate the commitment of the Court to fulfilling its mandate with integrity and independence: In July, the Court convicted Yekatom and Ngaïssona for crimes in the Central African Republic, with 1,965 victims participating in the Court's proceedings. In October, it convicted Abd-Al-Rahman on 27 counts, marking the first-ever conviction of war crimes and crimes against humanity in relation to the Darfur case.

Our meeting today is all the more important precisely because the ICC faces unprecedented challenges. Various attempts to undermine the Court's work test our collective commitment to the Rome Statute. For the ICC to continue its vital mission under increasingly difficult circumstances, the unity and resolve of States Parties remains essential.

The Republic of Korea has been a staunch supporter of the ICC from its inception. Since our ratification in 2002, we have demonstrated our commitment through concrete contributions: with Korean experts serving the Court, by hosting regional cooperation seminars, providing full cooperation in response to the Court's requests for evidence collection, offering sustained political support and as the 7th largest financial contributor. Korea will continue to stand with the Court.

Achieving universality of the Rome Statute is truly the path to strengthening the ICC. As ad-country focal point for universality alongside the Netherlands – whose commitment and cooperation we deeply appreciate – Korea has made various efforts to promote ratification of the Rome Statute and we will continue this mission, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

As we confront complex legal and political challenges, it is also important that we reaffirm the fundamental principles enshrined in the Rome Statute, including the duty of cooperation and the principle of complementarity, as well as other core principles that define the Court's mission and jurisdiction. These principles are indispensable to achieving our non-negotiable goals of ensuring accountability and delivering justice for victims. We look forward to engaging in sincere and constructive dialogue on diverse perspectives in this regard, while reaffirming our shared commitment to resisting unjust pressure firmly and in unity for the impartiality and independence of the Court.

The rule of law at the international level requires active defense and concrete support. The role of the States Parties to the Rome Statute is by no means inconsequential. The Republic of Korea renews its longstanding commitment to international criminal justice and will continue to support the Court in every possible way.

Thank you, Madam Vice President. /END/