



Vanuatu National Statement – ICC ASP 2025

Madame President, ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Vanuatu is proud to be here to address this esteemed assembly.

Vanuatu reiterates our unwavering commitment to the International Criminal Court and the values it seeks to enforce. We are proud to have engaged in various recent efforts to promote the strength and implementation of the Rome Statute.

Notably, in April this year, we were one of five countries that submitted an amendment to the UN Secretary General to harmonise the ICC's jurisdiction over the Crime of Aggression in line with the existing core crimes. We reiterate our gratitude to all States Parties for their collaboration to reach consensus at the Special Session this July and note our ongoing support for this critical conversation in the run up to 2029.

We are also grateful to continue our mandate as the Asia-Pacific's regional focal point on matters of non-cooperation with the Rome Statute, reflecting our commitment to promoting the perspective of small islands within international criminal law.

As a highly climate vulnerable nation, Vanuatu also observes with gratitude the Court's ongoing attention to the centrality of environmental crimes and harms to the commission of existing crimes under the Rome Statute. Particularly in light of the ICJ Advisory Opinion on climate change, we note that the links between environmental damage and grave violations of human rights have never been more apparent. We therefore take this moment to underscore our commitment to promoting ecocide as the fifth independent crime under the Rome Statute, both in times of conflict and times of peace. We thank the nations of Fiji, Samoa and the Democratic Republic of Congo for their public support of our amendment proposal to the Rome Statute and invite all interested delegations to explore this matter further with us.

Madame President, in closing, let me highlight that Vanuatu continues to observe threats and sanctions against the Court and its officials with great concern. Particularly for small states, the ICC – our Court - must be able to fulfil its role in maintaining international peace and security. We urge all States Parties to recognize the importance and the potential of the Rome Statute, both as it stands and as it may evolve.

I thank you.