

Statement on behalf of the Republic of Lithuania
by
H.E. Ms. Gabija GRIGAITĖ-DAUGIRDĖ

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International Criminal Court
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Madam President, distinguished delegates,

At the outset, I would like to reiterate that Lithuania aligns itself with the statement be delivered by Germany on behalf of a Group of Friends on the review of the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over the crime of aggression.

In my national capacity, I would like to underline the historical importance of this special session. The reality we witness today demands our solidarity towards making sure that the law is designed to serve both who mostly need it most in the pursuit of justice. We not only have a shared mandate but also a shared responsibility to make sure that justice does not change its face according to interests. Institutions are only as strong and useful as the rules and constraints allow them to be. Credibility of international criminal law depends on clear norms, institutions having the mandate to enforce them, and their consistent and coherent enforcement.

Although the Rome Statute, after Kampala amendments, has clear definition of the crime of aggression, its jurisdictional regime remains uniquely fragmented. This crucial accountability gap compromises our values, undermines peace, and emboldens violations of the fundamental principle of international law – that is non use of force. *Ad hoc* solutions demand enormous political and diplomatic efforts, and ultimately, they are never ideal and lead to double standards. Russia's aggression against Ukraine proved that this accountability gap hinders justice, is difficult to explain and understand.

We now have an opportunity that we must use and harmonize the jurisdiction over the crime of aggression with other international crimes. Therefore, Lithuania commends the initiative of five state parties (Costa Rica, Germany, Sierra Leone, Slovenia and Vanuatu), and urges all delegations to engage in frank and substantial deliberations so that the proposed amendment is adopted in this session.

Distinguished delegates, just a few days ago we marked the 1st of July, the day when the International Criminal Court was founded with the crime of aggression included in its jurisdiction. Kampala Review Conference gave another gift of hope for future generations: the definition of the crime of aggression. In this historical session, let us support draft resolution presented by Liechtenstein, and in doing so, let us reaffirm our collective commitment to international justice and uphold the integrity of the

International Criminal Court in support of peace, the credibility of international criminal law, and its consistent and coherent enforcement.

I thank you, Madam President.