

Written statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs of **Sweden**, Mr. Tobias Billström
at the Commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome
Statute of the International Criminal Court United Nations Headquarters, New York
17 July 2023

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

25 years after the adoption of the Rome Statute, an effective international criminal justice system is more important than ever. The adoption of the Rome Statute was a historic event and an important step towards closing the gap of impunity. On 17 July, we acknowledge the importance of continuing to defend international criminal justice and accountability for the most atrocious crimes. We must also act to protect the rights of victims. I reaffirm Sweden's full support for the International Criminal Court.

The fight against impunity is integral to a rules-based international order. The International Criminal Court is the key international institution in the quest for individual accountability, in line with the principle of complementarity. Only a truly universal court can fulfil its mandate. Sweden urges all States who have not yet ratified the Rome Statute to do so, to give victims everywhere access to justice.

In June, during the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the EU adopted council conclusions reiterating the unwavering support of the EU for the International Criminal Court. The EU emphasized that in leading the fight against impunity, the ICC must be able to work independently and impartially.

Sweden has been a steadfast supporter of the Rome Statute since its adoption and supports the work of the International Criminal Court. In addition to providing voluntary financial contributions to the Court, Sweden has also seconded public prosecutors and investigating officers. States' full cooperation with the Court is essential to its ability to carry out its mandate. Witnesses must receive protection, outstanding arrest warrants must be promptly executed, and States Parties must share the burden of enforcement of sentences. Sweden stands ready to share its experiences of relocating witnesses with other interested States Parties.

Supporting and protecting the rights of victims is crucial. The Trust Fund for Victims is an essential part of the Rome Statute system and a cornerstone of reparative justice for victims of the most serious crimes. I am therefore happy to announce today that Sweden, through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, has made a renewed commitment to support the Fund with an un-earmarked financial contribution of 15 million Swedish krona (SEK) or approximately 1.3 million EUR.

The adoption of the Rome Statute was a display of commitment on the part of the international community to end impunity for the most serious crimes, no matter who perpetrates them or where they are perpetrated. Sweden will continue its efforts to strengthen the international criminal justice system to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole.

Thank you.