



**Welcoming ceremony  
Republic of Moldova  
Statement by H.E. Mr. Jorge Lomónaco  
Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties**

Excellency,

On 12 October 2010, the Republic of Moldova deposited its instrument of ratification of the Rome Statute, bringing the total number of States Parties to 114. Today we are gathered to congratulate the Republic of Moldova and to celebrate this important decision, which is the outcome of a lengthy but fruitful process that involved its government and civil society and which demonstrates the commitment of Moldovans to justice and the rule of law.

Moldova's ratification of the Rome Statute marks a significant stride to put an end to impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide from the Eastern part of Europe. At the same time, it is an important step towards full European participation in the Rome Statute system. Moldova is the eighteenth Eastern European country to ratify the Statute and I am confident that it will inspire the few States on the continent that have yet to ratify the treaty to take similar steps in making a highly valuable contribution to Court's work.

2010 was as a very successful year for the Court and international justice. Four new States, namely Bangladesh, the Seychelles, Saint Lucia and the Republic of Moldova, belonging to four different continents, joined the steadily growing ICC family. This does not only demonstrate the commitment of a growing number of countries to the principles of the Rome Statute system, but it also conveys a strong message to the international community to further strengthen its efforts to ensure that the most heinous crimes should be investigated and justice dispensed.

We are delighted that the Rome Statute regime has crossed the prior boundary of the Prut River, extending its reach eastward to protect the population of Moldova. Having been at the crossroads of Latin and Slavic cultures over the course of several centuries and exerting a cultural influence well beyond its geographical area, we are confident that the step taken by Moldova will result in other countries emulating it in extending that protective regime of the Rome Statute system.

It is therefore a privilege for me, on behalf of the Assembly of States Parties, to congratulate the Republic of Moldova once again and to extend it a warm welcome to the growing ICC family.

The Hague, 11 February 2011

\*\*\*