



WELCOMING CEREMONY: CHILE

**Statement, H.E. Mr. Jorge Lomónaco (Mexico)
Vice - President of the Assembly of States Parties**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ambassador Juan Antonio Martabit,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have gathered to offer a warm welcome and congratulate Chile on its ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on 29 June 2009.

First of all, let me express that, as a representative of a sister nation from Latin America, I am particularly proud to witness the accession of Chile to the Rome Statute. I am well aware of all the efforts deployed by Chilean authorities in order to overcome the legal, political and technical challenges in the path towards ratification; these efforts were worth it and the result is a clear message to the International Community of Chile's commitment to contribute to global peace and international justice.

Chile's accession constitutes a significant accomplishment and a milestone not only for her, but also for Latin America and the international community as a whole, since we are advancing towards the cherished goal of universality. As of first September, we count 109 States Parties, thirteen of them from South America, which becomes the first region of the world where the provisions of the Rome Statute may

be applied throughout its geographical spread. A total of 396 million South Americans, from the Caribbean coast to Cape Horn, from the Galapagos Islands to Recife, are under the aegis of the normative regime that sovereign States established 11 years ago. Just as Latin America established the first “nuclear-weapons free-zone” under the umbrella of the Tlatelolco Treaty, let us hope that, within the next few years, other regions will follow and we can progressively celebrate the establishment of “Rome-Statute-zones” around the globe.

Let me also say that the accession of Chile to the Rome has a special meaning for my country. As Mexico went through a very similar ratification process, with similar challenges and difficulties, we closely followed the ratification process and provided our support within the limits of our possibilities and with due respect to the internal procedures.

Given the history of Latin American countries in the twentieth century, many of us are particularly moved by the ever-increasing support for the Rome Statute in the region. This recent ratification demonstrates a strong commitment and efforts from all levels of Chilean society and marks another step towards universal support for ending impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. I am convinced that Chile’s contribution to the work of the Court will be highly valued by all the relevant stakeholders.

In conclusion, I wish to express my genuine hope that other countries that have yet to join the Rome Statute family will be inspired by Chile’s example and reinforce our common struggle to end impunity.

On behalf of the Assembly, it is a pleasure to welcome Chile to the ICC family.
