



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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**Statement by Ambassador Motohide Yoshikawa
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
At the General Debate on the occasion of the thirteenth session of the
Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of
the International Criminal Court
11 December 2014**

H.E. Mr. Sidiki Kaba, President of the Assembly of States Parties,
Judge Sang-Hyun Song, President of the International Criminal Court,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by congratulating His Excellency, Minister Sidiki Kaba, on his election as President of the Assembly of States Parties. You have my delegation's full support. I would like to express our deep gratitude as well to the former President, Ambassador Tina Intelmann, for her invaluable contribution to the advancement of our work. I would also like to express Japan's sincere appreciation for the excellent leadership of the President of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Judge Sang-Hyun Song. My appreciation also goes to all the other judges, the Prosecutor, and the Registrar, for maintaining high esteem that the Court enjoys.

Mr. President,

As we can see from the lengthy election procedures where we are selecting best judges from both criminal law as well as human rights and humanitarian law experts, the ICC is more than a criminal court. The judges as well as the prosecutor have been making concerted efforts to fight against impunity with a view to achieving justice. Today, in supporting the activities of the ICC, I would like to speak on four points; namely, 1) Japan's policy toward the Court, 2) importance of victim reparations, 3) finance of the ICC, and 4) universality of the Court.

First, let me articulate Japan's policy toward the ICC. Since the drafting and adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998, Japan has maintained consistent policy towards the Court. That is to make the ICC more efficient, effective, universal and financially sustainable. Japan has provided not only the largest financial contribution to the Court (17% of the budget), but also highly capable human resources including judges and intellectual input. Japan has always been fully committed to the ICC, with its firm belief that the Court will contribute to the promotion of "the rule of law" concerning the crimes stipulated in the Rome Statute.

Secondly, I would like to address the ICC's important role in victim reparation. It is true that, in countries in the process of peace building, achieving justice and national reconciliation at the same time can be a daunting task. The ICC has a built-in system to defuse this dilemma by supporting victims, by such means as paying reparations to the victims. In this regard, my government highly welcomes the work of the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV), led by the Chair of the Board of Directors, Mr. Motoo Noguchi of Japan. It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to refer to Japan's voluntary contribution of approximately €600,000 to the Trust Fund for Victims made in this year. Japan will continue our support for the victims of armed conflicts, including the victims of sexual violence.

Thirdly, let me touch upon the issue of the finance of the Court. We want to commend that the Court has exercised its jurisdiction over nine situations and rendered four judgements in its first decade. However, it is important for the States Parties to examine the management and governance of the Court since the Court is an organ established by a treaty. Both the ICC and States Parties should aim for a shared view on the financial sustainability of the Court by addressing how to cope with the increasing financial factors.

Finally, I would like to share with you Japan's view on the membership of the Court. It is very clear that to make the ICC more universal, we need more States to join the ICC. In its first two years since its establishment, the membership of the Court grew to 97 States Parties. In the following 10 years, 25 new members joined the ICC, making the membership 122. In order to enhance universality of the Court, we have engaged in our dialogues with non-States Parties and provided technical assistance. However, this year, not a single country has joined the ICC. Based on Japan's experience as a co-focal point on universality of the Rome Statute together with Cyprus, perhaps it is time to consider what are the most appropriate measures that fit well for the current situation surrounding the ICC. Japan will continue to work with other States Parties on this important subject.

Mr. President,

After 12 years since its establishment, the ICC has passed its initial stage. The ICC is now at the stage of looking back its achievement and work toward more efficient, effective, universal and financially sustainable institution. I hope a few comments that I offered today may prove useful in your deliberation. Let me conclude by pledging Japan's continued commitment to the work of the ICC.

I thank you very much.