

Mr President,

The Czech Republic fully endorses the statement on behalf of the EU and wishes to add a few remarks in its national capacity.

Mr President,

The Czech Republic is strongly committed to the idea of the international criminal justice, in particular the International Criminal Court. We believe that the role of the ICC in the struggle against impunity is irreplaceable and stand ready to support it wherever possible. As State Parties we should uphold the judicial and prosecutorial independence of the ICC and the integrity of the Rome Statute system in general.

One of the main topics of this Assembly will be cooperation. We believe that cooperation constitutes the core element in effective functioning of the ICC and encourage all states to fully cooperate. The issue of cooperation with the Court goes far beyond the relations between the Court and the States Parties to the Rome Statute and it must be addressed in a much broader spectrum of relevant actors, involving in particular the UN Security Council. Yet in 2015, we are witnessing the commission of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, in particular by the ISIS, which should be referred to the ICC. We need to put an end to the impunity of the perpetrators of the most serious crimes, provide justice to victims and help restore the societies concerned.

The International Criminal Court is based on the idea that the primary responsibility for respecting international law rests with the States. Only when a State fails to act, then it is time for the international community to step in and show its responsibility towards individuals. The ICC does not replace national criminal justice systems, but rather complements them. The complementarity principle should be upheld also in the case of regional courts. It is a key element of the rule of law and the fairness of the international justice. Furthermore, we support the universality of the Rome Statute and invite all states to ratify and fully implement the Rome Statute.

In March 2015, the Czech Republic deposited the instruments of ratification of both Kampala Amendments. We strongly encourage early activation of the crime of aggression. Regarding other possible amendments to the Rome Statute, we are convinced that the Review Conference in Kampala should serve as a precedent that the acceptance of any future substantive amendments would be done only at review conferences after the deep discussion and thorough preparation.

The Czech Republic welcomes that this ASP will also discuss the issue of efficiency and effectiveness of court proceedings. In this regard, we call on the ICC to learn from the practice of the ad hoc tribunals of the UN Security Council. The Czech Republic also believes that we need to discuss the question of "economy of judicial proceedings". Therefore, we should focus on how to eliminate the unnecessary delays in judicial proceedings before the Court in a greater detail. This problem is closely related to the credibility of the ongoing trials before the Court.

Mr President,

Let me touch briefly upon the issue of the draft budget of the Court for 2016. While we are aware of the importance of ensuring sustainable functioning of the ICC, especially regarding the current workload, we appreciate all efforts made by the Court to fulfill its mandate in a cost-efficient and transparent manner.

Finally, the issue of victims has taken an increasingly important place in the contemporary system of international criminal law. It is my pleasure to inform you that the Czech Republic will contribute again to the Trust Fund for Victims. Every victim has to know that justice has been served in an adequate time frame and reparation is an indispensable part of providing justice. In this regard, I would like to highlight the ongoing work by the Court and the Fund on implementation of the first court-ordered reparations. Finding an appropriate model for victims' compensation is not an easy task and the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims plays a crucial role in this regard. The Czech Republic welcomes the election of the five new members of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims.

Mr President,

I would like to congratulate you on your active leadership of the Bureau and assure you that the Czech Republic – as one of the Bureau members – remains ready to fully cooperate with your mandate during this challenging mission.

Thank you, Mr President.