



Statement of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

15th Session of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal
Court

H.E. Ambassador Alvaro Moerzinger

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Checked against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by expressing my delegation's appreciation to you, to the Bureau of the Assembly of States Parties, to the Secretariat and other Organs for the outstanding work they have carried out throughout this year to make it possible for us to meet again in this Fifteenth Session. I would also like to welcome the new Vice President of the Assembly H.E. Ambassador of Costa Rica, Sergio Ugalde.

Mr. Chairman,

We are all aware that this is not an ordinary meeting of the Assembly of States Parties. It is not, first of all, because today - as never before - we, the members of this Assembly must renew our commitment to the development and strengthening of the international criminal justice, which has its most accomplished expression in the universality of the Rome Statute. Uruguay attends this Assembly with this strong commitment.

Mr. Chairman,

The sensitive situation that the International Criminal Court is facing, should make us reflect on the reasons and objectives for which it was created. To do this, let me bring you all back to the Rome Conference of 1998. All of us attended that Conference full of enthusiasm to reach consensus on the establishment of an international tribunal that would offer hope to the many victims of heinous crimes committed in several regions of the world. After intense and long negotiations, in which Uruguay actively participated, on July 17, 1998, the Rome Statute was finally adopted, starting an era where the fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes and the need to bring justice to victims occupy a central role. Eighteen years later, we can see both the power and the potential of this imperative of fundamental justice: justice is able to inspire hope and help repair fractured communities. Its potential is revolutionary. Its absence is devastating.

On the other hand, we are aware of the complexity of the successful execution of its mandate, and it is fair to say that all the power and potential of the ICC have not yet been implemented. The Court faces serious challenges: complex investigations in conflict situations, an endless list of mass crimes to select, difficulties in the cooperation of the States Parties and still very bureaucratized procedures. But the history of the International Criminal Court is much more than this. It is about the fundamental role of justice in maintaining and restoring international peace and security.

For this reason, Uruguay, the first Latin American country that ratified the Kampala amendments of 2010, is a strong supporter of the ICC, which was reflected in the enactment of Law 18.026 about cooperation with the Court. This national law not only incorporated the provisions of the Rome Statute, but also two key complementary instruments that were approved by the Assembly of States Parties in September, 2002 related to the elements of crimes and rules of procedure and evidence, which demonstrates the unwavering commitment of Uruguay with the International Criminal Court.

Mr. Chairman,

Uruguay attaches great importance to the reform of the working methods of the Assembly, the Bureau and The Hague and New York Working Groups. My delegation has worked intensively throughout this year from the positions it had the honor to occupy. Therefore we would be very pleased if in this session of the Assembly we can achieve concrete results to improve our working methods, which will led us to greater efficiency and effectiveness in our tasks.

Mr. Chairman,

The work carried out by the Court is fundamental and its principles are the ones defended by Uruguay in its foreign policy. However, international organizations, including the International Criminal Court, shall take into consideration the financial situation of States Parties. In that regard, my delegation believes that the management of resources handled by the Court shall be improved. Therefore, my country advocates that the budget for 2017 is kept as tight as possible. Together we must find a balance to combine this necessary exercise of containment of financial resources with the goal we all share - to provide the Court with sufficient means for the effective performance of its work.

Mr. President,

After eighteen years since the adoption of the Rome Statute, our aim should be to transform hope into reality, to strengthen and align ourselves with the voices of those who depend on the International Criminal Court for justice. We must commit and persevere until we reach it. We cannot do anything less than that. If we are able to overcome the current difficulties through dialogue and constructive spirit, the Court will be strengthened.

In this endeavor, you can count on the strong commitment of Uruguay.