



Mr Peter Lewis
Registrar of the International Criminal Court

**Remarks to the 17th Session of the
Assembly of States Parties**

The Hague, 10 December 2018

Mr President of the Assembly of States Parties,

Mr President,

Mr Vice-Presidents,

Madam Prosecutor,

Mr Chair of the Committee on Budget and Finance,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and
Gentlemen,

It is a great honor and privilege to address this 17th session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and to be presenting my first budget proposal of the Court on the 20th Anniversary of the Rome Statute.

Allow me at the outset to take this opportunity to **thank everyone** who has participated in this years' budget process – Ambassador Jens-Otto Horslund, the Facilitator for the budget and Vice-President of the Assembly, representatives of States Parties, the Committee on Budget and Finance and its Chair Mr Hitoshi Kozaki, as well as the other organs of the Court led by President Eboe-Osuji and Prosecutor Bensouda.

I am very much aware of the substantial investment the State Parties have made in the Court over the last 20 years and that you

have continued to generously fund the Court at a time when many of you have faced significant challenges on domestic public spending. However I am also keenly aware that **20 years ago you decided to create a court with a clear mandate to challenge impunity and hold to the highest standards of fairness and integrity.**

Accordingly, we are determined to clearly demonstrate **the value of your investment** in the Court and **our effectiveness** in carrying out the mission you have set us. We will **continuously improve**; we will make better use of co-operation with States and other actors to improve efficiency and reduce costs, and we will continue to enhance and improve our capability, flexibility and responsiveness.

The proposed programme budget for 2019 is an **important step in that direction** and was recognised by the Committee on Budget and Finance as the lowest budget in recent years. I was particularly pleased to note that the CBF welcomed the Court's efforts to identify savings and efficiencies, non-recurrent costs and other reductions.

It is important for me to note however that the Court's ability to absorb additional costs is determined not just by our efforts to

find efficiencies but also by the volume of the work we are dealing with. I note the Court is operating in 11 situations and the Prosecutor is carrying out 8 active investigations as well as preliminary examinations into 9 situations. Likewise, we have active judicial proceedings, including hearings in three trials, one recently surrendered suspect in pre-trial phase and on-going reparations proceedings in three cases.

Following the presentation of the proposed budget, the Court and the Committee of Budget and Finance had an intense and constructive dialogue as the CBF **carefully scrutinised the proposed budget**. I want to thank the CBF Chair and its members for the professionalism and thoroughness of that exercise.

The objective of the dialogue between the Court and the CBF is to deliver to you, the Assembly, a proposal for a balanced budget for the Court, which recognises, the need for an effective Court that has the resources it requires to implement its essential mandate, and which also recognises the need for a disciplined and efficient organisation.

This dialogue will be at it most effective when it is characterised by openness, transparency and trust.

We, the Court, must trust and value the technical expertise and objectivity of the CBF, and the CBF and the Assembly must trust and value the Court's knowledge of its core business, particularly with regard to operational matters.

I fully recognise my particular responsibility as Registrar to **ensure the effectiveness of this dialogue**. I am able to confirm to you that the budget proposal now being considered by the Assembly is the product of a **thorough exercise within the Court and a very detailed analysis by the CBF**.

I am particularly grateful for the care with which the CBF considered the issue of liquidity, and its recommendations in this regard.

I know that there are other issues that have been discussed for some time by the CBF and the Assembly, which continue to be of concern, including, for example, the adequacy of the contingency fund, and the working capital fund.

Now the proposed budget is with you for consideration. All of us at the Court are grateful to the budget facilitator, Ambassador Horslund for the skill, resilience and good humour he has shown

in the last few weeks.

In concluding, Mr President, I would like to take this opportunity to **express my deep and sincere appreciation to the staff of the Court** for their hard work and dedication, often in complex and sensitive circumstances.

Mr President. We await the outcome of your deliberations!

Thank you.