

**Statement of the Republic of the Korea**

**by Mr. You Ki-jun, Director-General of International Legal Affairs Bureau,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea  
at the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly of States Parties  
to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court**

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you, the Bureau, and the Secretariat of the Assembly for the preparations for this 18th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend the joint efforts by the Judges, the Prosecutor, the Registrar, and the Court's staff members to help end impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.

I am confident that, under your excellent leadership and guidance, this session will prove a resounding success.

Mr. President,

Since its establishment in 2002, the ICC has undoubtedly contributed to the promotion of the rule of law and respect for human rights by holding the most serious criminals accountable. This year, despite its heavy workload, the Court has made considerable achievements in a number of cases and situations, such as the ruling in the *Ntaganda* case.

Nevertheless, it is obvious that the ICC operates in a complex international environment and faces numerous challenges, both externally and internally. How we cope with these challenges is crucial. If they are successfully managed, with the strong support of States Parties, we can overcome these obstacles and strengthen the Court's role as the cornerstone of the international rule of law. In this context, I would like to focus on such topics as budgetary discipline, equitable recruitment and universality.

First, achieving greater efficiency and effectiveness must be a top priority for the ICC. The Republic of Korea believes that one of the most crucial factors in achieving efficiency is budgetary discipline. The Court undeniably needs the necessary resources to do its work, but it should not budget without performance evaluations or transparency. That could lead to a growth in inefficient practices and undermine the trust of not only States Parties but also non-States Parties.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea welcomes the three-year strategic plan of the ICC under the One-Court principle, and hopes to achieve budgetary efficiency, transparency, and good governance through the full implementation of the plan.

Second, my delegation notes with concern that there has been a persistent and chronic imbalance in geographical representation and gender balance in the recruitment of ICC staff.

Equitable geographical representation is a key principle of the Rome Statute, and one of the bases of the legitimacy and universality of the ICC. In this vein, the Court's efforts to improve the geographical and gender balance of its staff, such as the

Registry's Strategic Plan, are welcomed.

Considering that this is a protracted issue, however, the Republic of Korea calls upon the Court to take concrete action to achieve this goal at its earliest convenience.

Third, I would like to focus on promoting the universality of the Rome Statute. Twenty-one years ago, we created the most innovative mechanism in international criminal justice. To fully implement the Rome Statute, more countries need to join the ICC. Given this, I would like to warmly welcome the Republic of Kiribati's accession to the Rome Statute. It is a step forward in promoting universality, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

Nonetheless, there has recently been a slowing in the accession of new members. Considering this, the exchange of information and the sharing of our own experiences with non-States Parties would be of great value. Consequently, the Republic of Korea will continue to further its efforts to reach out to non-States Parties and encourage their ratification of the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea welcomes measures to address the issues facing the Court, including the three points I have touched upon, through consultations among States Parties. My delegation appreciates the leadership and dedication of the President and Vice Presidents of the Assembly for their preparation of the Matrix over possible areas of strengthening the Court and the Rome Statute system. We also welcome the terms of reference for the review, which can be achieved only with active cooperation from multiple stakeholders.

The Republic of Korea supports the view that the ongoing discussions on the review of the ICC should mainly be State Parties-driven, in close cooperation with the Court and related entities. In particular, the prioritization of issues and the pursuit of efficiency are imperative in the process of strengthening the Court and the Rome Statute.

Mr. President,

This Assembly marks a defining moment for the ICC. With the collective commitment of all States Parties, the Court will be able to open a new chapter as a mature and respected institution. Our discussions at this session can also help ensure the fair and transparent election of the next Prosecutor and Judges in 2020.

I look forward to this Assembly engaging in meaningful and productive discussions on all these important matters and adopting measures that will contribute to furthering the noble objectives of the ICC.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm the deep commitment and staunch support of the Republic of Korea for the goals and activities of the ICC.

Thank you. /END/