

## STATEMENT PRONOUNCED BY ITALY'S VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MARINA SERENI, AT THE XIX ASSEMBLY OF ICC STATES PARTIES

Mr. President,

I am honoured to address the **Assembly of States Parties** on behalf of the Italian Government.

Italy **fully aligns** with the intervention on behalf of the **European Union and its Member States**.

Nowadays, we are all confronted with the pandemic, which has generated a **widespread and dangerous sense of uncertainty**. While recognizing that the Covid-19 virus has not been defeated yet, it is our duty to **look beyond the crisis**.

The most effective and structural answer to the challenges we are facing lies in a **reformed and enhanced multilateralism**. Only a rules-based international system, centered on universal values, fundamental rights, equality and inclusiveness will be able to lead to a **long-lasting solution** to the present crisis.

Italy considers the **International Criminal Court**, alongside national jurisdictions, a **pillar** of the international rules-based order and a **pivotal instrument** for fighting impunity and strengthening accountability for the most serious crimes. The Court sits at the apex of the **broader system** supporting international criminal justice and accountability. As a matter of fact, it plays a **key role** in holding perpetrators of those crimes accountable and providing justice for victims.

The **focus on victims** is an essential element of international criminal justice. Italy considers that the role of the Court consists not only in **bringing perpetrators to justice** but also in **delivering justice to those primarily affected** by crimes committed. In this way, the Court can really contribute to building conditions for sustainable peace and post-conflict

reconciliation. For these reasons, Italy has decided to contribute to the Trust Fund for Victims at the International Criminal Court.

As the central pillar of a global system of international Justice, **neutrality, independence and complementarity** are crucial elements for the functioning of the International Criminal Court.

In order to make the Court stronger and more effective, Italy attaches great importance to the efforts aimed at **reviewing its functioning**. In this regard, I would like to commend the work of the **Independent Expert Group**, which will guide all the relevant stakeholders in the important process of reform of the ICC.

In this framework, Italy underlines the need to continuously **observe and safeguard the judicial and prosecutorial independence** of the Court and the **integrity of the Rome Statute** throughout the review process. We also emphasize the need to ensure **proper management oversight, good governance and administrative accountability** throughout the prosecutorial and judicial activities.

Owing to the extensive nature of the Report and the number of recommendations suggested, we share the view on the need to address them in an **orderly and structured way** also by setting clear priorities and a dedicated review mechanism.

Bearing in mind that we need to be **ambitious in our efforts**, I would like to confirm the strong commitment of my Country to keep working with the Court and all the other relevant stakeholders to further **strengthening its role, as well as the Rome Statute system**, as a mean to ensure the international justice and the end of impunity.

In this light, we attach the utmost importance to the next **Assembly of States Parties**, which is called to elect new judges and the new Prosecutor. It is crucial that both **judges**

**and the Prosecutor boast remarkable professional experience, independence and the highest moral rectitude.**

The ICC is a Court of last resort, whose jurisdiction can be activated only when the gravest crimes are not prosecuted by States. The ICC steps in with the sole purpose of **pursuing justice, which is key to achieve lasting peace and international security.** This is the International rules-based order that we are called to build, with a spirit of **genuine and effective cooperation.** Be assured that Italy will **spare no effort** in sustaining the integrity and independence of the Court.