

Statement of the Republic of Korea

by H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of the Netherlands Yeondoo Jeong,

at the 19th Session of the Assembly of States Parties
to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

14 December 2020

(Greeting)

Mr. President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to President O-Gon Kwon and the Vice Presidents, the Bureau, the Working Groups, and the Secretariat of the Assembly for their preparations for this 19th Session of the Assembly of States Parties, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19.

My delegation also commends the joint efforts of the Presidency, the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor, and the Registry to help end impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.

I am confident that this session will be guided to a successful outcome under your excellent leadership.

(IER Report)

Mr. President,

On the 30th of September, we welcomed the issuance of the final report of the Group of Independent Experts, which is the most far-reaching undertaking the Assembly has commissioned since the Court began its operations in 2002. The Republic of Korea is convinced that this report is an excellent starting point for strengthening the ICC and the Rome Statute system and enhancing the performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Court in facing numerous challenges, both externally and internally.

It is our hope that the Assembly, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, will carefully and thoroughly consider the achievable and actionable recommendations of the Independent Experts, and take a decision on a States Parties-driven way forward, so as to efficiently implement the recommendations.

Let us pledge to work together to achieve our common goal in the global fight against impunity, as well as to support the Court in its mandate to end impunity for perpetrators of the most heinous crimes, and to bring justice to the victims.

(Prosecutor election)

Mr. President,

My delegation would like to emphasize that the election of the next Prosecutor is also an important step forward, so we can address the issues facing the ICC and strengthen the Rome Statute system. Furthermore, electing the Prosecutor by consensus is crucial, in order to enable the new Prosecutor to address all the challenges ahead, in cooperation with States Parties.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to President O-Gon Kwon, the

Vice Presidents, and the Bureau for their hard work to identify a consensus candidate in spite of the unprecedented COVID-19 situation. We hope that close cooperation among the States Parties and civil society, under the leadership of President Kwon, will lead to the election of a highly competent Prosecutor in the near future.

(Under-representation in Recruitment)

Mr. President,

Equitable geographical representation is a key principle of the Rome Statute, and is fundamental to the legitimacy and universality of the ICC. The Republic of Korea notes that there has been a persistent and chronic imbalance of geographical representation in the recruitment of ICC staff, to the detriment of certain countries and regions, particularly the Asia-Pacific region.

In this vein, we call upon the Court and Assembly to pay more attention to the issue of under-representation and to rectify the geographical imbalance at its earliest convenience.

(Promotion of Universality)

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea regards achieving the universality of the Rome Statute as one of the top priorities of the ICC. We believe that the participation of more States in the Rome Statute will undoubtedly lead to stronger support for the Court.

In this connection, through the universality working group, the Republic of Korea, together with the Netherlands, has been making efforts to reach out to non-States Parties. The Republic of Korea will continue to strengthen these efforts, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.

(Closing Remarks)

Mr. President,

This Assembly marks a defining moment for the ICC. With the full support for the Court by all States Parties, the ICC will be able to carry out its important mandate of ensuring justice for the victims of the most serious crimes. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its deep commitment and staunch support for the activities of the ICC.

I would like to bring my remarks to a close by once again expressing my sincere gratitude to you, Mr. President, for the preparations of this Assembly. I look forward to meaningful and productive discussions during this Assembly on all these important matters.

Thank you for your attention.