

Statement by
Winifred Roemer
Head of Delegation
to the
Eighth Session of the Assembly of States Parties
to the Rome Statute of the
International Criminal Court

The Hague
19 November 2009

Check against delivery

Embassy of the Republic of Suriname
Alexander Gogelweg no. 2
2517 JH The Hague
Telephone: 070-3650844, Fax: 070-3617445
E-mail: ambassade.suriname@wxs.nl

Mr. President,

Allow me to thank you and the host state for the opportunity and facilitation to participate in the 8th session of the Assembly of the State Parties of the International Criminal Court. I am deeply honored to present a statement to the Assembly.

With the establishment of the International Criminal Court an important breakthrough was made in the international law. Suriname, since becoming a state party will also contribute to the goal of the international Criminal Court, namely putting an end to the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and crime of aggression.

As part of the global community we have no other choice, but to support the global community as well as the more than hundred countries who ratified the Rome Statute. The international principle set forth in article seven, of the Surinamese Constitution, namely that the Republic of Suriname promotes solidarity and cooperation with other nations in the fight against colonialism, neo-colonialism, genocide and in the pursuit of national liberation, peace and social security, fully emphasized our commitment. The principle of complementarity as set forth in the Preamble and article one of the Rome Statute carries with it that the ICC member states are in the first place responsible for the investigation and adjudication of crimes within the jurisdiction of the international criminal court by using their own investigative, prosecutorial and adjudicating institutes. According to article 17 of the Statute, the International Criminal Court only comes into play when the states have failed herein. In our view the effectiveness of the ICC will be completed, if the legal protection and the obligations under the Rome Statute are fulfilled.

The first steps to achieve this have been taken place in Suriname. In this regard a number of legislative products are in the process of drafting, namely :

- The punishment of the international crimes referred to in article 5 of the statute.
- Regulation of the cooperation with the criminal court.
- The punishment of offences against the administration of justice by the court.

With regard to this, within this framework, we are ready to implement an effective system for legal protection and take all appropriate steps nationally and internationally.

Mr. President,

The protection of human rights and dignity is of great importance and all measures as well as our collective motivation can ensure respect for international humanitarian law in cases where serious violations occur. In this regard we welcome new States Parties, Chili and the Czech Republic as the 109th and 110th country, who became state parties to the Rome Statute. The now more than one hundred countries have conferred in the ICC jurisdiction to prosecute those crimes of major concern to members of the international community.

Mr. President

Since the adoption and entry into force of the Rome Statute the court has made tremendous progress. As a state-party to the Rome Statute we have chosen to strengthen our national sovereignty and to give full implementation to the Rome Statute and we hope to go forward to universal participation and implementation of the Rome Statute in order to promote justice and maintain international peace and security. Thank you for your attention.