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STATEMENT

BY

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DELIVERED AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE OF THE NINTH SESSION OF
THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME
STATUTE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

HELD IN NEW YORK
FROM 6 - 10 DECEMBER 2010

Mr. President,

It is an honour for me to be given this opportunity to deliver this statement during the ninth session of the Assembly of States Parties on behalf of the Ghana delegation. From the outset, the Ghana delegation wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the Democratic Republic of Congo on behalf of the African Group of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and would like to add a few comments reflecting our national perspectives.

My delegation joins other speakers in congratulating you, Mr President, for the able manner you and the other members of the bureau have steered the affairs of this Assembly so far as reflected in your comprehensive report on the activities of the bureau. The Ghana delegation also thanks Judge Sang-Hyun Song, President of the International Criminal Court, for his elaborate report on the activities of the Court. My delegation is equally grateful for the presentation made by the Prosecutor of the ICC and also for the report submitted by the Chair of the Board of the Trust Fund for Victims.

The above-mentioned reports and presentations highlight the achievements of the Rome Statute System but likewise highlight a variety of challenges that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the Court discharges its functions more effectively and efficiently with a view to strengthening the regime of international criminal justice to ensure accountability and end impunity in respect of grave crimes of the most serious concern to the international community, including genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of aggression.

Mr President, The Kampala Review Conference held a few months ago has been generally acknowledged as a success. Ghana is taking steps to activate its National Task Force for the Implementation of the Rome Statute which will, among other things, consider steps to ratify the amendments adopted in Kampala, as well as the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court and to incorporate the Rome Statute within our municipal law as soon as practicable.

Mr President,

My delegation applauds the Secretary-General for ably discharging his mandate conferred on him under the Rome Statute to convene the first Review Conference in Kampala, as well as all concerned who contributed to the success of the Review Conference, including Ambassador Christian Wenawaser (Liechtenstein), President of the Assembly of States Parties, and Ambassador Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini (Jordan) who Chaired the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression. We also acknowledge the valuable and diverse roles played by civil society and NGO groups during the review conference.

Mr President, I wish to conclude by reiterating the need for States Parties to continue to uphold the obligations they assume under the Rome Statute more seriously. While it is imperative that we accord equal attention to all the key pillars and principles underpinning the Rome Statute, namely complementarity, cooperation and the independence and impartiality of the Court, among others, my delegation wishes to stress the need to sustain the momentum in promoting the universality of the Rome Statute.

The idea of a permanent international criminal court was conceived of with the aim of establishing a court with universal membership and clothed with the mandate to exercise universal jurisdiction, thereby ensuring that no individual in any State will be left behind or beyond the reach of international criminal justice. This demands that we sustain the efforts at attaining the goal of universality of the Rome Statute if the progress made at the Kampala Review Conference is to be consolidated before and after 2017.

I thank you, Mr President.