

**Statement by Mr. Ho-sung Lee, Representative of the Republic of Korea
to the Fifth Session of Assembly of States Parties
to the International Criminal Court
(23 November 2006, The Hague)**

Mr. President,

Before I begin, I would like to thank you for your efforts and able leadership in successfully organizing and chairing the Assembly of States Parties last year. My delegation firmly believes that, under your guidance, this year's session will be another success and will make substantial progress in tackling the various issues we are faced with.

My delegation would also like to express its deep appreciation to Judge Kirsh and the other Judges of the Court, and to Prosecutor Ocampo and the staff of the Court for their valuable dedication and ongoing efforts to make the Court fully operational. My special thanks go to the Dutch delegation for its excellent role as the host country.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea has been an active and enthusiastic supporter of the ICC since its inception. It has therefore given me great pleasure to witness the

remarkable and substantial progress the Court has made over the past few years. In particular, this year's achievements are very impressive. They include, among other things, the first arrest of a suspect, the adoption of a strategic plan and the implementation of outreach activities in several fields.

Since the adoption of the Rome Statute in 1998, the number of States Parties to the Statute has dramatically increased to more than 100, which is a very encouraging development and demonstrates these States' resolve to wage a war against the world's most atrocious crimes. However, we should continue more efforts towards achieving universal ratification of the Statute.

I also welcome the considerable progress the Court has made in its investigative and judicial proceedings over the past few years. It is notable that the Court now has its first suspect in custody and is continuing its investigations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Sudan. The outcomes of these cases will become indicators of the future effectiveness of the Court.

Since the Court doesn't have its own police force, it needs to secure cooperation with relevant States and international organizations such as the UN for the effective arrest of criminals and carrying out of investigations. In this regard, it is an encouraging development that the ICC has concluded several cooperation agreements with States Parties and international organizations this year.

The outreach activities the Court has planned and implemented are also worth applauding in that those activities can contribute to an increase in the awareness of local peoples who have suffered the most from the crimes under ICC jurisdiction and can thus secure their voluntary cooperation necessary for investigative and judicial proceedings.

The Republic of Korea remains faithful to its commitment to and support for the work of the Court in all areas. It is my pleasure to draw your attention to the fact that my government ratified the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the ICC about a month ago and the Agreement is now in force in the Republic of Korea. It is of our view that the Agreement is an essential element in ensuring the effective functioning of the ICC. It is also a positive development that our domestic implementing legislation for the Rome Statute will be submitted to the National Assembly within this year. My delegation prepared and distributed the related information for your reference this morning.

I sincerely hope that the ICC will continue to work diligently toward the eradication of the culture of impunity and to enhance its reputation as the only permanent international criminal court in the world.

In closing, I would like to reaffirm strong support of my country for the ICC in achieving its noble goals.

Thank you.