

Mr. President

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates,

1. I would like to convey on behalf of my country and myself our sincere felicitations to you Mr President on your assumption of the Presidency of the Seventh Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).
2. I am confident that under your able leadership and guidance we will continue to build on the achievements we have made so far, in our efforts to build a truly independent and impartial Court.
3. Mr President, Let me also assure you of the full support, cooperation and goodwill of the Republic of Botswana in the discharge of your mandate.
4. Mr President, the year 2008 marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute as well as the establishment of the International Criminal Court. This calls for a celebration. However for us in Botswana this calls for more than that. This milestone calls for a few minutes of reflection on our individual support for the work of the Court.
5. Botswana reaffirms her commitment to the ideals and purposes of the Rome Statute to eradicate impunity.
6. As a country that strongly believes in the rule of law, Botswana strongly supports the work of the Court and is convinced that there should be no interference of any sort in the work and processes of the Court. We believe

that an effective and independent court is a necessary element for peace and security in our contemporary world where universal respect for human rights is of paramount importance to humanity.

8. The Statute of the International Criminal Court gives the Court inherent jurisdiction over the core crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, aggression, and war crimes in armed conflict. We are mindful of the fact that there is yet no agreed definition of the term “**aggression**”. We have been closely following the debates of the Special Working Group. We are confident that State Parties and Members of the Special Working Group will find definition that will be acceptable to all.
10. Mr. President, Botswana recognizes the importance of the Trust Fund for Victims and is also considering contributing towards this fund.
11. We were honoured this year with the visit by the Deputy Prosecutor, Mrs Fatou Bomm Bensouda and soon after her departure, we acceded to the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court. This will pave the way for a national workshop for stakeholders to develop a road map for the full implementation of the Statute.
12. Before I conclude Mr President, may I inform this Assembly that Botswana has made available one of its well accomplished nationals for the position of Judge. Justice Sanji Monageng was elected a Commissioner in the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in 2003.

Justice Monageng was appointed a Judge of the Courts of the Republic of The Gambia in 2006, under the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation Programme, as an expert. She is presently serving in the same capacity in the Kingdom of Swaziland. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Law Society in Botswana. I do not have any doubt that if elected she will

become a valuable member of this court. Justice Monageng was also endorsed by the African Union in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt in June 2008.

13. To conclude, Mr President, I once more assure you that Botswana intends to work closely with the Secretariat to share information and experiences with other nations in order to promote the universality and full implementation of the Rome Statute as well as the proper and effective work of the International Criminal Court.

I thank you for your attention.