

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to be here today and I wish to extend my gratitude to the Coalition for the ICC for organizing this event.

20 years since the Rome Conference, the International Criminal Court has managed to consolidate itself, with the crucial support of States Parties and civil society, as a fully-fledged and leading international institution in the fight against impunity. The work of the Court has contributed to the rule of law, the promotion of human rights and ending impunity. As such, while international criminal justice may still be a project in progress, I believe that it has now become a significant part of the international legal order to ensure international peace and security.

Nonetheless, the Court still faces important internal and external challenges to its efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy. In this regard, we must recognize that, although the Court is the most visible part of what was established in 1998, there are other key components of the Rome Statute system, that is, cooperation and complementarity. These two important principles require the continued support of States Parties, international organizations and civil society.

The principle of complementarity is the bedrock of the system, and thus the primary responsibility for addressing Rome Statute crimes rests with national jurisdictions. However, only half of the 123 States Parties have adopted national implementing legislation necessary to ensure that they have the capacity to investigate and prosecute at the domestic level and cooperate with the Court effectively.

Moreover, the Court remains bound by its treaty limitations, and therefore is unable to address the mass international crimes that continue to be committed in the world. Delivering international criminal justice swiftly, fairly, and with quality is not a job the Court can do on its own. The Court requires the continued, strong political and diplomatic support of the international community and the cooperation of States is indispensable in ensuring the ICC's effectiveness and to strengthen its credibility. The Rome Statute system will definitively benefit from States using diplomatic dialogue with other States to promote cooperation between them, as well as encourage ratification and full implementation of the Rome Statute.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The Court and States are not the only actors with roles to play. Civil society actors have been instrumental in promoting the establishment of, and in helping to sustain the system of international criminal justice. In this regard, the CICC has not only proven to be a

truly devoted and consistent partner of the Court but also an unapologetic proponent and defender of the Rome Statute System. We could not have managed without its support and constructive criticism.

After the historical Assembly session last December where the activation of the jurisdiction of the Court over the crime of aggression was adopted by consensus, I am convinced that the Rome Statute system has truly become an integral part of the system for securing international peace and justice. Further, I strongly believe that our common endeavor in the fight against impunity should continue unrelenting in the pursuit of justice. Through the combined efforts and political will of States Parties, the Assembly will continue to support the achievement of the goals of the Rome Statute.

At this important juncture in its history, the Court needs our support more than ever. It is my firm belief that in order for the Rome Statute system to succeed, it is crucial to continue mobilizing States' support to be more active in the efforts to fight impunity. In the end, the Rome Statute system can only be as effective and efficient as we, States Parties, together with the Court, and other stakeholders, make it through our actions and cooperation.

I thank you for your attention.