

The Hague/New York, 17 November 2023

Your Excellency,

I am honored to write to you on behalf of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (Coalition), the world's largest civil society partnership advancing international justice. With member organizations in 150 countries, the Coalition is leading the global fight to end Rome Statute crimes through a commitment to the core values of human rights and justice. The Coalition works to promote a fair, effective, independent and universal ICC and accountability and redress for the victims of such crimes through the Rome Statute system.

As you know, the 22nd session of the Assembly of State Parties (ASP) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court will take place from 4 – 14 December 2023 at United Nations Headquarters, in New York, USA. This year's ASP session offers a critical opportunity to demonstrate to victims around the world the international community's collective resolve to uphold respect for human rights, accountability, and the rule of law.

Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Rome Statute, advancing the fight for global justice is as important as ever, given the widespread commission of crimes within the ICC's mandate, and the calls for justice in all parts of the world. The ASP session will serve as a key platform for stakeholders, including your government, to uphold and to reinforce the role of the ICC in the wider international justice architecture. In the face of concrete threats against the ICC, its officials, and civil society and human rights defenders who cooperate with the Court, your collective diplomatic and practical support for the Court is crucial.

Recognizing the critical role of the ICC in the Rome Statute system, States Parties should seize every opportunity, including but not limited to the **ASP General Debate, thematic plenary sessions and negotiations on resolutions**, to reaffirm, inter alia:

- The **centrality of victims – including the meaningful realization of their rights** to participation and reparations under the Rome Statute; full support for **outreach to victims and affected communities** as a core and essential activity of the ICC, that is fundamental to raise the Court's profile, create environments conducive to the ICC's work, and manage expectations;
- The crucial role of **civil society organizations and human rights defenders** fighting to bring justice to victims around the world and working with the Court, and the commitment to do more to support, defend and protect human rights defenders who are on the frontlines of justice efforts;
- Your unconditional resolve to upholding the **integrity of the Rome Statute** and defending the ICC's **judicial and prosecutorial independence**, and to **oppose attacks aimed at undermining the Court's work and independence** and in particular, strongly condemn and counter any **threats or sanctions** against the ICC, its officials, and those cooperating with the Court;

- A commitment to provide the Court with sustainable and secure resources across all its organs and programs in its regular budget, so it may conduct its work efficiently and effectively across all situations under its global mandate to safeguard the Court's independence and legitimacy and avoid perceptions of politicization and selectivity in its work;
- The commitment to **elect highly qualified ICC and ASP officials**, through fair, transparent, and merit-based elections, free from vote-trading, in order to safeguard high-quality prosecutorial and judicial decisions and increase trust in the institution's ability to deliver justice. This should include applying rigorous national nomination procedures and establishing a fair, transparent and comprehensive **permanent vetting mechanism** to ensure high moral character of candidates to all ICC and ASP elections;
- The commitment to **robust cooperation**, including through enhanced efforts to execute arrest warrants, the conclusion of **voluntary cooperation agreements** with the ICC, and the ratification of the **Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the ICC (APIC)**;
- The importance of the **universality of the Rome Statute** to expand the Court's reach and reduce the impunity gap, as well as for its **full and effective domestic implementation**; and the commitment to upholding **complementarity** obligations; and
- The commitment to efficiently conclude the implementation of the **review process of the ICC and the Rome Statute**, bringing together States, Court officials, experts and civil society in a joint effort to strengthen the work of the Court.

Twenty-five years after its adoption, the ICC often remains a last beacon of hope for victims who have no other avenue for justice. The success of the Court and the Rome Statute system cannot depend on the institution alone. It needs the unwavering commitment of all States to fulfil their obligations and duty in order to fully realize the promises of Rome for current and future generations.

Sincere regards,



Melinda Reed

Director

CICC Secretariat