

2023 election of the Registrar of the International Criminal Court
Questionnaire to candidates

Name: Oswaldo F. Zavala Giler

Date: 11 September 2022

Vision for the ICC Registry:

1. Why have you applied for the position of Registrar of the International Criminal Court (ICC)?

As Registrar, my calling would be to continue building on the legitimacy of the ICC by ensuring its operational sustainability and strengthening the trust and respect for its justice mandate. I stand ready and able to take this important step in my long-standing service to the Court by transforming into opportunities my comprehensive experience in all areas of the work of the Registry to meet the challenges ahead. I am guided by the vision of building a model of modern public administration that ensures effectiveness, safeguards accountability and encourages a working environment that promotes professionalism, respect, diversity, inclusion and equality, values which I strive to represent. To achieve this, I am committed to devoting to this institution, and to those it was established to serve, my vision, experience, energy and skills to support the operational effectiveness of its judicial functions and thus contribute to preserving its legacy and safeguarding its future.

My career is a testament to my dedication to the Court and its success. For the past 16 years I have served the ICC in different capacities. To be given the opportunity to serve as the next Registrar of the ICC would allow me to put to the service of this organization the vast institutional knowledge I possess and the lessons I have learned over the past years while directly supporting the work of the three previous Registrars.

Throughout my time at the ICC, I have directly contributed to the non-judicial administration of the Court and to the effective functioning of the Registry in all areas under its responsibility. As such, I possess first-hand experience on internal decision-making processes on complex policy, operational and strategic matters impacting the Court, such as those related to its finances, efficiency, operational effectiveness, culture and legitimacy. I have directly contributed to the effective implementation of the Registry's duty to provide effective and efficient services to the judicial proceedings from a legal, technical, strategic and financial angle. I have supported the quasi-judicial functions of the Registrar by providing policy and legal advice on matters affecting, *inter alia*, accused persons and the defence, and the ability of victims to participate in proceedings, including reparations. I have taken part in a number of efforts and reviews concerning strategic and policy discussions on the Court's engagement with victims and affected communities, as well as the evolution and establishment of the Registry's external offices. Importantly, I have been involved in the work of the Assembly of States Parties (Assembly or ASP) since its very early stages.

I believe in responsible leadership. To lead responsibly as Registrar means to exercise authority in a decisive and strategic manner in order to effectuate results, but also to be held accountable for my actions and decisions. This inter-relation between authority and accountability is at its best when leadership is exercised with a clear understanding of the complexities of the job: what needs to be done and how to achieve it. In addition to possessing a thorough understanding of the technical requirements of the Court's operations, I bring real insight into the strategic relevance of its mandate. This insight is of significant value to the Registry not only in presenting a coherent and persuasive vision for its future, but also on the practical impact it has on the effective delivery of its responsibilities.

In times of shifting challenges and heightened expectations, I am convinced that the Court requires a Registrar that leads—with energy and commitment—a reinvigorated vision for the future while rooted in a solid technical and strategic understanding of the mandate of the Court. Importantly, the next Registrar must embody and reflect the evolving values that the international community demands of the institutions that represent it.

2. What do you believe are the top two or three challenges confronting the ICC and Rome Statute system in the coming years, and how would you address them, focusing in particular on the role of the ICC Registry?

The main overarching strategic challenge faced by the ICC is the continuous consolidation of its **legitimacy**. The Court needs from its leadership a long-term strategic vision that continues to enable the institution and its system to stand ready and firm in the pursuit of its complex and sensitive mandate.

While the Court's legitimacy is not always at risk, it is constantly at stake and is often impacted by some of the more systemic issues affecting the institution, as these directly affect the trust placed on the organization by its stakeholders and the international community as a whole.

The Registry contributes to strengthening the Court's legitimacy first and foremost by guaranteeing its **operational sustainability**. This is reliant on a number of strategic factors, including: i) ensuring an adequate level of resources required for the delivery of the Court's mandate, ii) promoting a healthy and productive working environment, iii) galvanizing trust and support from stakeholders, and iv) safeguarding cooperation including, in particular, judicial cooperation.

Conversely, an inadequate level of services and support from the Registry not only affects the effectiveness of the operations of the Court, but also creates costly long-term inefficiencies, especially in relation to the judicial proceedings. Such inefficiencies can in turn affect some of the fundamental principles and standards of fair trial, and thereby directly impact on the Court's overall legitimacy.

In this regard, servicing the Court by ensuring its **operational sustainability** is the most direct and comprehensive responsibility of the Registrar. It encompasses, among other duties, building and sustaining a public administration that is accountable, responsible and efficient; maintaining the support services required by the Judiciary and the parties and participants to the proceedings to bring to effect the judicial mandate of the Court; enabling transparent processes with the Assembly conducive to the discharge of the ASP's responsibility to provide managerial oversight to the Court; and, putting in place the mechanisms and structures that facilitate a meaningful relationship with affected communities and the societies impacted by the work of the Court.

As noted above, to sustain its operations, the Registrar must **ensure the adequacy of the resources** available to the Court to deliver on its mandate, focusing on strategic and operational priorities. Importantly, the Registrar must guarantee that resources are available in a sustainable manner in order to safeguard the continuity of its work and the ability of the Court to prioritize its activities based on the exigencies of its mandate and strategic priorities.

As it is States Parties that contribute through their national finances to the Court's budget, the Registrar must guarantee the most cost-effective and efficient use of resources, while fostering an environment of **fiscal responsibility** for the demand and use of those resources. An efficiently run and fiscally responsible administration will allow for a constructive environment based on trust and respect that will be more conducive for stakeholders' willingness to increasingly support the work of the Court.

When referring to the need to ensure adequate resources as a pre-condition to the operational sustainability of the ICC, special emphasis should be made on the Court's staff. The staff of the ICC make up over 75 percent of the allocated resources in the ICC budget. This means that the Court's effectiveness, the sustainability of its operations, and its long-term legitimacy, are directly and primarily reliant on the work of its personnel. It is the commitment and dedication of those working at the Court that ensures that operations are carried out even in complex and challenging circumstances. As a result, safeguarding the operational sustainability of the ICC requires the Registrar to **guarantee a productive, healthy, diverse, respectful, motivated and committed workforce**.

As an organization, the Court owes a duty of care to its staff as a matter of right, but it also substantially benefits from the collective well-being of its workforce. For this and other reasons, building a model of modern public administration that embodies the world's evolving values and ideals, and encourages a safe working environment that promotes professionalism, respect, diversity, equality and inclusion, is not only an aspirational duty based on principle, but rather a fundamental prerequisite for the success of the Court.

The operational sustainability of the Court is also reliant on **cooperation from States Parties** and **support from stakeholders**, including, as appropriate, non-States Parties, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, and societies impacted by the work of the Court. Without cooperation and support, the Court is unable to execute some of the most fundamental aspects of its judicial mandate. As the Registrar acts as the channel of communication between Judges and States in order to seek their cooperation and, moreover, sets up the structures that enable engagement with many of the Court's stakeholders, it is crucial to have in the Registrar a credible and trustworthy interlocutor.

Therefore, to effectively ensure the operational sustainability of the Court, the Registrar must promote trust in its administration, in the responsible and efficient use of its resources, in the existence of effective accountability mechanisms, in the ability to meet the judicial requirements, and in the information available in relation to the work of the Court and its needs. These actions, in turn, create an environment that fosters respect for the Court and its work in a manner conducive to a constructive dialogue based on common principles and objectives, that enhances political support.

In sum, I believe the main long-term strategic challenge of the Registry is to significantly contribute to the continuous strengthening of the Court's legitimacy by ensuring its operational sustainability. The effectiveness of international organizations is largely reliant on the support from their stakeholders driven by the legitimacy of their mandate and work.

3. The Registry is a neutral organ of the Court that provides services to all other organs so the ICC can function and conduct fair and effective public proceedings. How would you describe the relationship of the ICC Registrar vis-à-vis the ICC Presidency and the ICC Chambers; the Office of the Prosecutor? Additionally, how would you describe the relationship with the Trust Fund for Victims?

The relationship between the organs of the Court is governed by the Rome Statute.

In broad terms, the Statute provides that the proper administration of the Court is the **responsibility of the Presidency**, with the **exception** of the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP), and designates the **Registrar** as the principal administrative officer of the Court **responsible** of the non-judicial aspects of the administration of the Court, and of servicing the Court, **including** the OTP, **without prejudice** to the functions and power of the Prosecutor. The functions of the Registrar are exercised under the **President's authority**. The Statute further provides that the OTP is **independent** and that the Prosecutor has **full authority** over the management and administration of the OTP, including its staff, facilities and other resources thereof.

It is important to understand the governance of the Court not as a mere administrative framework that qualifies authorities, division of responsibilities and reporting lines, but as the institutional foundation of a system designed to enable and safeguard **judicial and prosecutorial independence**. In other words, the governance of the ICC must first and foremost be understood and interpreted from the lens of functional judicial and prosecutorial independence. For this very reason, administration and independence are inextricably linked in the Court's governance: «the independence of judicial and prosecutorial activity is entirely underpinned by the administration of justice, and the administration of justice is entirely dependent on the administration of the Court».¹

Undoubtedly, throughout the life of the Court the practical implementation of the principles governing the relationship between the organs of the Court has created tensions. The complexities of the institutional makeup of the ICC have progressively required increasingly sophisticated solutions, including coordinating mechanisms, operating procedures, consultative arrangements, all of these grounded on a key operating principle: the **One-Court Principle**.

In this regard, the One-Court Principle is not a mere political aspiration, or institutional tagline, but rather, it is an essential binding force that allows for institutional cohesion. Without the One-Court Principle as a grounding exigency of the system, the nature of the mandate of the Court's organs would likely allow them to drift further away from each other, risking institutional fragmentation. Accordingly, the Court's governance must reinforce the

¹ Overall response of the Court to the Independent Expert Review of the International Criminal Court and the Rome Statute System – Final Report, pursuant to resolution ICC-ASP/19/Res.7, 14 April 2021, para. 21.

principles that sustain the functional judicial and prosecutorial independence of the organs of the Court, while at the same time ensuring a stable and precise systemic cohesion under the One-Court Principle.

Ensuring this fragile balance by both continuously seeking to strengthen and safeguard the Court's independence, as well as progressively improving the inter-organ processes and mechanisms that enable the Court's united functioning, must remain a key focus of the Court's leadership.

As stated in article 43 of the Rome Statute, the Registrar is responsible for the non-judicial aspects of the administration and servicing of the Court, including the OTP (but without prejudice to their functions and powers). As such, the Registry provides for the common administrative platform and services on which the administration of justice and, consequently, judicial and prosecutorial independence depend on.

As indicated when addressing the first question to this questionnaire, responsibility is the expression of the intersection between authority and accountability. Thus, to be responsible must mean to be able to exercise authority and be held accountable for it. Therefore, the Registrar's responsibilities under the Statute should not be construed as mere delegated functions, but rather as an onus.

The President of the Court has a relationship of authority over the Registrar. This is a key principle for two main reasons, namely, to ensure that the responsibilities of the Registrar are implemented guided by the duty of the Presidency to ensure the proper administration of the Court, and to ground the accountability of the Registrar's administrative functions on the judicial mandate of the ICC. However, this should not be interpreted to mean that the Registry is subsidiary to the President or the Presidency. Such an interpretation would conflict with the explicit responsibilities of the Registrar to service the OTP, from which the Presidency is expressly excepted by the Statute.

In practice, the relationship between the Presidency and the Registrar is characterized by oversight, coordination and cooperation. On the one hand, the Presidency relies on the support provided by the Registry, as well as on the information it provides on matters impacting on strategic priorities and risks. On the other hand, and on the basis of the cooperation received from the Registrar, the President's oversight can focus on fundamental strategic questions at the core of the Presidency's responsibility for the proper administration of the Court. Such an understanding allows for the respective exercise of authority, avoiding micromanagement and duplication, and promoting respective accountability.

The relationship of the Registrar and the Chambers is perhaps the most clearly defined and exhaustive, mostly because the responsibilities of the Registrar in servicing the judicial function are largely spelled out in the normative texts in the context of the judicial proceedings. In this regard, the Registrar has the duty to ensure the necessary operational preconditions so that the Judges can deliver the justice mandate entrusted to them, and that the parties and participants to the proceedings are effectively able to exercise their rights.

With regards to the OTP, the starting point for defining the relationship is the delta between the responsibility of the Registrar for the non-judicial aspects of the administration and servicing of the Court, including the OTP, and the Prosecutor's independence and full authority over the administration of their office. This is clarified in article 43 of the Statute, when it provides that the exercise of the Registrar's responsibilities in relation to the OTP shall be done *without prejudice to the functions and powers of the Prosecutor in accordance with article 42*. Accordingly, the common administrative platform of support and services provided by the Registry should constitute the basis of the OTP's operations and activities except when and if these prejudice the functions and powers of the OTP. In practical terms, the Registry and the OTP have established over the years consultative arrangements that allow them to identify how to best guarantee the provision of services in a manner respectful of the respective organ's mandate and responsibilities. Such arrangements are exemplified in a number of systemic and ad hoc processes, including, for example, in relation to the development and implementation of the Court's budget, framework arrangements for the protection of witnesses, security coordination, the planning and execution of operations including logistical support, and discussions concerning the required support platforms, including facilities, equipment, vehicles and IT infrastructure.

Importantly, the coordination and consultative arrangements also extend to the joint engagement of the Presidency, the Prosecutor and the Registrar in leading key Court-wide efforts such as the Strategic Plan, the budget, crisis management, as well as policy and administrative issuances.

Concerning the Trust Fund for Victims (TFV), the Registrar acts in an advisory capacity to its Board of Directors. This is because the implementation of the mandate of the TFV is directly reliant on many of the functions of the Registry, including, for example, in relation to the support provided by external offices and presences, and other sections within the Registry including the Victims Participations and Reparations Section (VPRS), the Public Information and Outreach Section (PIOS), and the Procurement Unit. The Registrar must ensure constant coordination with the TFV as a key actor within the Court, supporting the proper implementation of its mandate. In this regard, the Registrar must promote a continuous alignment of priorities with the TFV based on strategic and operational considerations. Furthermore, the Registrar has direct administrative responsibilities over the functioning of the Secretariat of the TFV, as it was established under the Registry's administrative purview.

Like the Secretariat of the TFV, there are a number of bodies that exist within the Court with functional autonomy but that operate under the administrative purview of the Registry (Office of Public Counsel for the Defence, Office of Public Counsel for Victims, Secretariat of the ASP, Independent Oversight Mechanism, Office of Internal Audit, Executive Secretary of the Committee on Budget and Finance). The relationship between these bodies and the Registry must be understood as one concerning and limited to the proper adherence to the administrative policy framework within the Court and the provision of essential services for their adequate functioning.

One key governance relationship that is missing from the question is the relationship with the Assembly. According to article 112 of the Rome Statute, the ASP shall provide management oversight to the Presidency, the Prosecutor and the Registrar regarding the administration of the Court. As the principal administrative officer of the Court, a number of the oversight functions of the Assembly directly concern some key responsibilities of the Registrar, including, the consideration of the Court's budget and its implementation, matters concerning administrative policies with budgetary consequences, such as legal aid, and issues concerning human resources. It is therefore key for the Registrar to enable transparent processes with the Assembly allowing for appropriate and effective oversight of the Court's administrative functions.

Experience in management and addressing workplace culture issues:

4. Please describe your skills and experience relevant to the effective management of the ICC's human resources, including in addressing allegations of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying and/or abuse of authority on the part of staff members; in addressing the chronic imbalance in geographical representation and that of women in senior management positions; as well as addressing issues that disproportionately affect women, minorities and people of color.

I understand the culture at the ICC. I have been a part of its evolution over the years and have had direct exposure to some of the major issues impacting the workplace environment. I equally understand the difficulties and limitations that the three last administrations in the Registry have faced in addressing some of these challenges from a structural, strategic and policy perspective.

As stated in a previous question, building a model of modern public administration that embodies the world's evolving values and ideals, and encourages a safe working environment that promotes professionalism, respect, diversity, inclusion and equality, is not only an aspirational duty based on principle, but rather a fundamental prerequisite for the success of the Court. It is simple: being treated with respect, feeling safe in your own working environment, encourages motivation, increases innovation, supports engagement and raises employee productivity thus resulting in better performance.

Accordingly, I am of the view that diversity in the workplace, including gender balance, geographical representation and multilingualism, should not be seen as a mere exogenous expectation of States and stakeholders demanding a more balanced representation. Rather, these objectives must become an internalized priority of the Court driven by the need to ensure a more dynamic, productive and representative workforce.

In and of themselves, gender balance and equitable geographical representation do not ensure a safe and secure working environment, but the opposite is true: the lack of balance and diversity in the personnel of the Court promotes a culture of inequity and disproportion whereby abuse and harassment are more likely to take place. A

multicultural environment is less so when some commonalities in the characteristics of the workforce prevail over others in bigger numbers and in positions of higher authority. Contrary to an environment mainly dominated by a given culture, gender and/or race, diversity by necessity softens the edges of cultural interactions by identifying and addressing unconscious biases, and fostering more dialogue and communication, spilling over different aspects of the professional environment.

Ensuring a balanced representation of women in the workplace, including in particular in higher positions, is essential for the sustainable legitimacy of the Court. In order to address systemic issues affecting women in the workplace, a multi-pronged strategic approach needs to be undertaken to tackle policies, practices, structures and behaviors that disproportionately affect women. The recently established Focal Point for Gender Equality has already put in place a number of key strategic initiatives aimed at mainstreaming the consideration of gender issues in a cross-cutting manner in the Court.

In my capacity as Chief of the Budget Section I am currently involved in efforts to implement a gender-responsive approach to the expenditure and planning of the Court's resources. Through the sequential and progressive analysis of trends and data of expenditures, using gender focused parameters, it would be possible to identify patterns of organizational behavior, as well as practices and procedures, that affect the situation of women in the workplace from a systemic perspective. In turn, on the basis of the analysis, dedicated solutions could be devised impacting future budgetary planning.

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace must be understood from the perspective of intersectionality. Gender, race, gender identity and sexual orientation are not isolated characteristics but rather coexist. In this regard, it has been traditionally challenging for the Court to address more openly matters concerning sexual orientation and gender identity. The topic rarely makes it onto the agendas of the Court's leadership even when considering the existing gaps that need to be addressed in terms of safety and duty of care for LGBTIQ employees. A challenge that is not unique to the ICC is that it operates in environments where anti-LGBTIQ legislation exists. Some of the risks in this context include employee safety and security, non-compliance with local legislation and reputational issues.

For these reasons, in 2018 I was actively involved in the establishment of the ICCQ, a sexual and gender diversity network at the Court. Within the ICCQ, I coordinated the submission of a position paper to the Staff Union Council with regards to their efforts to review the then policy to address harassment in the workplace, including sexual harassment. The comments and suggestions of ICCQ in its paper were noted by the Group of Independent Experts in their findings and recommendations concerning Workplace Culture.

The Principals of the Court have expressed their clear commitment to the implementation of solutions to address some of the main issues affecting workplace culture, including those identified by the Group of Independent Experts. Accordingly, the policy framework has been recently strengthened, the Focal Point for Gender Equality was established and a temporary solution for the hiring of an ombudsperson is currently underway. Similarly, a thorough evaluation of recruitment practices has been conducted with major improvements expected as a result.

While these measures are crucial and urgent, the empowerment of staff in the workplace must also be reflected in the empowerment by the administration of the bodies that represent them. In this regard, the role of the Staff Union Council is key in ensuring legitimate channels of communication that voice the views and concerns of staff in an impactful and meaningful way.

Importantly, the improvement of workplace culture is reliant on leadership commitment. A safe, secure, diverse, respectful and productive working environment must be sustained by leaders who embody and reflect with their behavior the values demanded of the organization, and who do not tolerate, in any form or degree, conducts that promote expressions of hatred, racism, discrimination, including gender discrimination and discrimination against members of the LGBTIQ community, abuse of authority, harassment and/or sexual misconduct.

5. What, in your opinion, does the Rome Statute requirement of "high moral character" mean and how do you embody these characteristics? What measures can be taken to ensure that all ICC officials and staff also embody the requirement of high moral character?

The ICC is grounded on the commitment by States to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, and bring justice to the victims of unimaginable atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity. It seems only fitting that the individuals elected to positions of moral leadership within the Court, those tasked with putting into action its momentous mandate and upholding the standards of the law, are subjected to an appropriate scrutiny of their moral character. The public trust and integrity of any institution is often upheld by and measured against the persons elected to lead it. As such, stakeholders in the Rome Statute system demand leadership that aspires to be a testament to the core values expected of the Court itself.

I understand high moral character as an archetype of behavior, which demands that the actions of an individual continuously adhere to a set of shared values and uphold recognized standards of trustworthiness, reliability, respect for the rights of others, respect for the law, and professional commitment.

While the nature of this key requirement in the Rome Statute for elected officials is somewhat indefinite, at a minimum it should entail the absence of conducts that violate the law, the absence of conducts that promote or tolerate in any form or degree expressions of hatred, racism, discrimination, including gender discrimination and discrimination against members of the LGBTIQ community, of abuse of authority, harassment and/or sexual misconduct.

Importantly, the common values that underpin the expected behavior of a person of high moral character evolve as the international community adapts to new paradigms and priorities. More than ever before, there is a sense of dynamism in the way values influence social norms and shape the expectations that societies have from the institutions that represent them and the individuals that lead them. As such, nowadays the requirement for high moral character should also be measured against the ability of an individual to embody and reflect through their behavior the pressing demands for respect for diversity, inclusion and equality, and respect for the environment.

I consider myself to be a person of high moral character. Throughout my career, I have consistently demonstrated my dedication to the values of the Rome Statute. My professionalism and integrity are clearly reflected in the principled manner in which I serve the Court. I conduct myself with full transparency, taking accountability for my actions and decisions. Importantly, since 2016 I have filed yearly financial disclosure and declaration of interests statements with the UN Ethics Office whereby I report on relevant information pertaining to myself and my spouse. Furthermore, since I joined the ICC in 2010, I have undergone four vetting and security clearance processes (2010, 2016, 2018 and 2022) upon undertaking different functions within the organization.

Participation of victims and affected communities

6. Please describe your experience and/or expertise in dealing with victim participation in proceedings. How would you manage the Registry's role to ensure that the statutory right of victims to participate in proceedings is achieved in the most meaningful manner whilst ensuring efficiency and expediency?

The matter of victims participation is one of the most prominent and meaningful functions under the mandate of the Registry. By virtue of directly supporting the three previous Registrars with legal, policy and strategic advice on matters under their responsibility, I have been involved in a number of important policy and legal discussions as concern decisions of the Registrar in relation to participation, legal representation, notification, protection and reparations to victims.

Accordingly, I have taken part in a number of Court-wide efforts concerning the multi-dimensional aspect of the Court's engagement with victims, and more particularly, in relation to some of the key aspects of the Registry's functions that support and enable the exercise of victims' rights in proceedings before the Court.

In 2010, while working at the Coalition for the ICC (CICC), I was involved in the Review Conference in Kampala, Uganda, and on the efforts and discussions around the stocktaking exercises, including on Victims and Affected Communities. In 2012, I took part in the efforts led by the Registrar's office to issue a revised crosscutting Victims Strategy based on the results of the stocktaking exercise at the Review Conference. I was also involved in

the evaluation, submission and discussions —with the CBF and States Parties— around the review of the Legal Aid policy for both defence and legal representation of victims carried out in 2012 at the request of the Assembly. Furthermore, in 2015 I was involved in institutional discussions concerning the normative and structural mechanisms in the Registry and the Court to enable effective and meaningful victims participation and their legal representation. Similarly, I was actively involved in the discussions that led to the decisions on the structure and functioning of Registry’s country presences, including in relation to supporting participation of victims. In my capacity as the Registry’s Focal Point to the Group of Independent Experts, I was part of the discussions that led to their consideration of the recommendations on the victim application system. In my current capacity as Chief of Budget Section in the Registry, I have been actively involved in the planning, operationalization and identification of resources and synergies to maximize Registry’s support to the Chambers, victims applicants, legal representatives, as well as the TFV in relation to reparations.

I believe I possess a well-rounded understanding of the normative framework, including the evolution of Chambers’ practices and precedents around the participation of victims and reparations. Similarly, I possess a clear understanding of the challenges faced, both internally within the Court and in the different contexts in which the Court operates on the ground, the experiences gained, the opportunities for improvement, and the consequent long-term procedural and financial efficiencies that could be gained. Importantly, such systemic efficiencies would focus on improving Registry’s engagement with victims allowing the Court to enable them to exercise their rights in a meaningful, secure and effective manner.

A number of central improvements in relation to participation of victims and the support of the Registry to the proceedings have already been achieved. The next Registrar must be able to discern these good practices and build upon them to ensure the continued strengthening of the system by identifying opportunities for further improvement.

Accordingly, the Registry has already put in place a new uniform victim application process in a number of proceedings. The victim application process is the so-called ‘ABC process’ which different Chambers have approved in different cases. This initiative aims, where appropriate, at consolidating a more cohesive and harmonized practice. This has recently resulted in the adoption of this process in the latest version of the Chambers Practice Manual, following a review and general approval by the Appeals Chamber in the *Said* case. The Chambers Practice Manual also standardizes the new combined application form for victim participation and reparations leading to a standard application form in all cases before Chambers, as well as standardizing the collection of victim application at least until the end of the Prosecution case at trial, providing victims with more time to come forward.

Importantly, the Practice Manual also considers the continuation of collection of victim information for the purpose of reparations until the end of trial. This allows for a major efficiency in reparation proceedings as the relevant Chamber would have before it comprehensive information concerning potential beneficiaries should the case result in a conviction. By mapping and identifying potential beneficiaries by the time of a trial’s judgment, the Registry is supporting a more streamlined and accelerated reparation process. The efficiencies achieved will likely have an impact on the time it currently takes for the identification of beneficiaries in ongoing reparations proceedings, as well as on the resources the Registry continues to dedicate including, in particular, for legal aid and field support, as a result of the consequent delays in the implementation of reparation orders.

One key systemic efficiency to be achieved is reviewing and strengthening the strategic approach of Registry’s functions in the field. The approach of the Registry to field operations and presences must be rooted on an understanding of the realities on the ground and aligned with the priorities and operational requirements in the different procedural phases. Rather than the creation of formulaic building-blocks and fragmented approaches, the Registry should be able to devise ways of increasing its impact on the countries where the Court operates by formulating dedicated solutions, relying on national and community-based expertise, and responding to the realities and challenges particular to the different situations and the different judicial phases.

In regards to Registry’s functions to support the participation of victims, the establishment and operationalization of country presences must not be guided by a “one size fits all approach”, but rather be specifically designed and catered to the specificities of each context and the scale and complexity of the individual cases and proceedings. By designing dynamic, portable and fit for purpose structures in the field, the Registry would prevent fragmentation and unnecessary duplication of resources, and improve the development and implementation

of strategic plans and policies, as well as allow for a more efficient and strategic allocation of resources to these activities. In addition, the implementation of a cohesive vision requires a strategically centralized model grounded on a solid understanding of the context on the ground and a common long-term strategic vision that flexibly maximizes outputs across situations. This approach will promote internal synergies and ensure a coherent, responsive and significant engagement with victims and affected communities in all cases and situations before the Court.

7. The Registrar has a special mandate vis-à-vis the outreach activities of the Court, especially regarding victims and affected communities. How will you ensure that outreach is carried out at the earliest stages of proceedings, including preliminary examinations, and how would you describe the roles and responsibilities of the Registry and other organs in these different phases? Please elaborate on any experience relevant to fulfilling this mandate, as well as your philosophy regarding the role of the ICC's field presence.

Ensuring the publicity of the judicial activities of the Court is integral to delivering fair hearings and transparent justice. In particular, providing accurate and comprehensive information to victims and affected communities, promoting understanding, managing expectations and responding to concerns through timely outreach activities must be a priority of the Registry.

The ICC is a court of law. The Registry is a neutral organ of this judicial institution, therefore any public communication that the Registrar is mandated to do should reflect that neutrality. The Registry ensures the public dissemination of appropriate, neutral, and timely information concerning the activities of the Court through public information and outreach programs. In this context, outreach is aimed at making the Court's judicial proceedings accessible to those communities affected by the situations and cases before the Court.

Outreach is a two way communication process whereby the activities, mechanisms and processes put in place to create the conditions for a proper dialogue require to be tailored to the specific context of each situation. The Registry must ensure open channels of communication, create neutral platforms and establish trust with the affected communities to guarantee that the messages of the parties and participants to the proceedings are conveyed in the most adequate way.

Outreach activities need to ensure timely, neutral and accurate information throughout the whole judicial process. Therefore activities need to be led and carried out by the Registry, the neutral organ of the Court, in close coordination with the various actors that intervene in the judicial process and in full respect to their independence and roles, in particular the independence of the OTP. For instance, during the initial phases of the proceedings (until a warrant of arrest is issued and the suspect is surrendered to the Court), the messages of the OTP will be key, while during the pre-trial, trial and appeals proceedings, the Registry must ensure the proper communication of the Chambers orders and decisions. Furthermore, during the reparation phase, the TFV will have a crucial role when reaching out to the affected communities.

With regard to conducting outreach activities during preliminary examinations, experience demonstrates that there is indeed a high demand of information during this pre-procedural phase. In fact, the Assembly has consistently emphasized «the need for the Court to continue to improve and adapt outreach activities(...) including where appropriate, by early outreach from the outset of the Court's involvement, including during the preliminary examination stage».²

To complement the Court's limited resources during this stage of activities and ensure that the information is delivered in a timely manner, partnerships with local actors are crucial. With an innovative and creative approach, basic information packages and supportive materials can be developed and made available to local civil society able to support and amplify with their networks and knowledge of the specific situation the efforts done by the Court. Such an approach has been also noted by the Assembly in the context of its omnibus resolution, whereby it recalls that the issues of public information and communication about the Court and its activities constitute a shared a

² ICC-ASP/20/Res.5, op. para. 71.

responsibility of the Court and States Parties, it further acknowledges the significant contribution of other stakeholders.³

In relation to field presences and their role in relation to outreach, some of the same considerations previously mentioned in relation to participation of victims apply. Accordingly, the approach of the Registry to field operations and presences must be rooted on an understanding of the realities on the ground and aligned with the priorities and operational requirements in the different procedural phases. In regards to outreach, the approaches and tools must be adapted to the realities and circumstances on the ground, as well as to the situation of the specific communities bearing in mind their languages, educational background, prior knowledge of the Court, culture and access to internet and electricity, amongst other factors. For example, while with some affected communities traditional media such as radio or social media, including instant messaging platforms, might result in a very efficient way to communicate, in some other cases, building the trust of community leaders to have access to more traditional ways of communication might be key to ensure a meaningful engagement. Accordingly, the implementation of a cohesive vision requires a strategically centralized model grounded on a solid understanding of the context on the ground and a common long-term strategic vision that flexibly maximizes outreach across situations. As with victims participation, this approach will promote internal synergies and ensure a coherent, responsive and significant engagement with communities in all cases and situations before the Court.

8. The ICC has established constructive and long-term relationships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the press. Please describe any previous experience you have working with NGOs. How do you see the Registry's role towards these actors?

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the press, academia and other civil society organizations are recognized key actors within the Rome Statute system.

As indicated previously, the operational sustainability of the Court is also reliant on support from civil society organizations as a key stakeholder, including in particular in the societies impacted by the work of the Court. Without their support, the Court's ability to execute some of the most fundamental aspects of its mandate would be considerably affected. Notably, supporting the Court's mandate does not necessarily mean supporting its decisions, operational choices or policies, but it means having a constructive partner dedicated to ensuring the Court's success and effectiveness. In this regard, the Registrar must set up the structures that enable a constructive and mutually respectful engagement with the Court's stakeholders.

Through my experience working in the Coalition for the ICC for over five years, both in The Hague and in New York, I have a direct and acute understanding of the importance of the role civil society and media organizations play in support of the mandate of the Court. In this capacity, I contributed to the work of many of the members of the Coalition, including NGOs in situation countries, in the development of policy positions in support of the work of the Court, including on victims related matters, defence, cooperation and complementarity. In this role, I supported advocacy strategies aiming at mainstreaming the political support to the Court and international justice in general.

Since I joined the Court in 2010, I have actively sought to establish and nurture a relationship of mutual trust with civil society organizations, particularly on strategic matters impacting on the Court's legitimacy, or its ability to conduct its work. In this regard, I pay particular importance to the continuation and, where appropriate, strengthening of the existing consultative arrangements with civil society, including in particular the annual ICC-NGO roundtables. The relationship with civil society organizations was particularly valuable while I was heading the ICC liaison office to the UN in New York when political sanctions were imposed on ICC officials. Their bravery and unwavering support, alongside that of many States Parties and other stakeholders and partners, was fundamental in devising ways to protect the institution through a common vision, strategy and commitment.

While, generally speaking, the Court and its Organs have collaborative relationships with civil society, both international NGOs as well as with civil society organizations in all situation countries, it is important to identify further opportunities for meaningful engagement. Undoubtedly, NGOs play a key role in relation to policy development within the institution in some key areas where their expertise and knowledge of the contexts in which

³ ICC-ASP/20/Res.5, op. para. 71.

the Court operates enriches the outcome of such discussions. In this regard, the next Registrar will be able to review and update key processes and strategies, both in situation countries and in HQ, where the input from civil society and media organizations will be of particular importance.

I would like to highlight that the relationship between the Court, NGOs and media organizations is of an institutional nature. In fact, the Group of Independent Experts dedicated a portion of its findings and recommendations to the relationship with the civil society and media organizations and considered them to be a force multiplier for the Court in promoting and carrying out its work. The importance of these dynamics was especially noted in relation to the situation countries, where the Experts found that more efforts are required to improve the relationship between the Court with NGOs and media.

Furthermore, references to the relationship between the Court and these key stakeholders respectively are contained in a number of the Court's legal texts, strategic plans, policies, standard procedures and guidelines. Notably, article 40 of the Court's Headquarters Agreement with the Host State recognizes the role of NGOs in the fulfillment of the mandate of the Court, of media organizations in reporting on the work of the Court, and of independent bodies of Counsel. Through this provision, the host State enables the establishment and functioning of such organizations in its territory.

The Assembly has also continuously recognized with appreciation the invaluable assistance that civil society organizations to the Court, including by formally acknowledging the coordinating and facilitating role of the NGO Coalition for the ICC for the purpose of the participation of NGOs in the meetings of the Assembly and its subsidiary bodies as provided for in rules 93 and 95 of the rules of procedure of the ASP. During its last session, almost all resolutions adopted by the Assembly recognized the role of civil society organization, including on matters pertaining to cooperation, the review of the Court, universality of the Rome Statute, the organization of work of the ASP, complementarity and the strengthening of national jurisdictions, and in relation to the upcoming elections of the Registrar.

Fair trials and equality of arms

9. The ICC registrar is responsible for establishing the eligibility and qualifications of external counsel and team members and providing support to defence counsel and legal representatives of victims. Please describe your experience with these issues, including the administration of legal aid and providing access to necessary facilities and resources to protect the rights of the defence. Please also describe your experience in addressing issues such as gaps in gender equality and working conditions on external teams.

The matter of defence and equality of arms is a fundamental function under the mandate of the Registry. In this regard, in addition to the relevant provisions of the Statute, rules 20 to 22 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence outline the responsibilities of the Registrar in relation to the types of support to be provided to promote the rights of the defence, consistent with the principle of fair trial as defined in the Statute. Under the referred rules, Registry support to the defence can broadly be categorized as administrative, financial and technical and in particular includes: (i) assignment of legal assistance to qualifying suspects or accused persons through the implementation of a legal aid policy; (ii) practical and logistical support to defence teams and; (iii) enabling and facilitating the adequate representation of suspects and accused persons in the courtroom. In addition to these forms of support, the Registry also assists the work of the defence through more specialized judicial-related services, such as the protection of defence witnesses and the transmission of requests for cooperation on behalf of defence teams to States and international organizations. Furthermore, rule 20.1.d tasks the Registrar to advise the Chambers and Prosecutor on relevant defence-related issues.

By virtue of directly supporting the three previous Registrars with legal, policy and strategic advice on matters under their responsibility, I have been involved in a number of important policy, legal, budgetary and structural efforts concerning key aspects of the Registry's functions that support and enable the exercise of the rights of the defence in proceedings before the Court, and the conditions of detention of suspects and accused persons. I was also involved in the evaluation, submission and discussions —with the CBF and States Parties— around the review of the Legal Aid policy for both defence and legal representation of victims carried out in 2012 at the request of the

Assembly. Furthermore, in 2015 I was involved in institutional discussions concerning the normative and structural mechanisms in the Registry and the Court to enable effective and meaningful support to the Defence. Importantly, such discussions generated the momentum for the subsequent establishment of the ICC Bar Association and its recognition by the Assembly. Similarly, I have been actively involved in many of the subsequent discussions and reporting to the Assembly, its working groups and the CBF on issues concerning the planning and implementation of legal aid resources. In my capacity as the Registry's Focal Point to the Group of Independent Experts, I was part of the discussions that led to their consideration of the recommendations on defence and legal aid. In my capacity as Head of the ICC Liaison Office to the UN, I was involved in the coordination with the UN in their support to cooperation requests from the defence. In my current capacity as Chief of Budget Section in the Registry, I have been actively involved in the planning, monitoring and reporting on the use of legal aid resources. Furthermore, I have been involved in advising from a budgetary and administrative perspective the efforts currently being undertaken by the Registry in relation to the review of the legal aid policy and, importantly, the proposal of solutions for the contractual situation of the members of legal teams in terms of access to minimum contractual standards of employments.

Pursuant to articles 55.2 (c) and 67.1 (d) of the Rome Statute, suspects and accused who lack sufficient means to pay for legal assistance have the right to be assigned legal assistance by the Court without payment. The assignment of legal assistance and appointment and qualifications of counsel for the defence are further elaborated in rules 21 and 22 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence. In regards to the approach of the current legal aid policy, there exists broad consensus on the need to update the scope and level of resources afforded to external counsel and their teams, taking into consideration the complexities of the cases before the Court, the experience gained with the increasing judicial workload of the Court in different stages of the proceedings, and the need to ensure budgetary efficiency.

Furthermore, the issue of the working conditions of the members of external teams is of concern to the Registrar not only from the perspective of the duties of the Registry in support of the defence, but also in the context of the general responsibility of the Registrar to guarantee a safe working environment for all those working within the Court. In this regard, this question was identified as one of the areas requiring remedial action in the draft strategy on gender equality and workplace culture. The objective is to integrate the perspective and situation of members of external teams into the Court-wide reflection on the standards of behavior and workplace culture across the organization. Another important objective in this regard is ensuring more diversity, including geographical representation and gender balance, among Counsel, but also in relation to the members of the teams. In this regard, efforts done in the past by the Court with the support of civil society organizations aimed at promoting qualified African female lawyers to apply to the list of Counsel and those for the members of the legal teams could be replicated with a broader geographical scope.

In the context of the ongoing legal aid discussions in the framework of the Assembly's working group in The Hague, important progress has been made regarding the models for remuneration of members of the external teams, and their access to disciplinary framework mechanisms. Currently, different options are being considered in order to address some of the key systemic issues, ensuring the continuation of adequate support to the defence and teams of legal representatives of victims.

While the Registry's neutrality is a fundamental principle that enables the provision of support to parties and participants to the proceedings, it also indicates the need for an institutional presence of the Defence in the Court, including in some of its strategic and policy discussions. The roles played by the Office of Public Counsel for the Defence, the ICC Bar Association and, more directly, by the teams of external Counsel in the context of the specific cases, must be understood as constitutive elements of the judicial nature of the Court's mandate.

Cooperation with the court

10. Cooperation of states parties is key for the court to discharge its mandate. What measures or initiatives will you take to increase cooperation with the court, including to increase the number of cooperation agreements in particular for the release of persons, enforcement of sentences and witness relocation?

As previously indicated, the operational sustainability of the Court is also dependent on cooperation from States Parties and support from stakeholders, including, as appropriate, non-States Parties, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, and societies impacted by the work of the Court. Without cooperation and support, the Court is unable to execute some of the most fundamental aspects of its judicial mandate.

The issue of cooperation has been center stage since the first years of the Court. There has been a consistent understanding by all actors in the system that without cooperation the Court is but a theoretical exercise. As a result, numerous policy and strategic discussions have taken place over the years, internally within the Court, as well as in the context of the Assembly's working groups and, more recently, in the context of the review conducted by the Group of Independent Experts, which made important findings on matters pertaining to arrest, freezing of assets and financial investigations, among other issues.

Over the past twenty years, and in the context of the cases and situations so far before the Court, the willingness and consistency with which the Court has received both mandatory and voluntary forms of cooperation have been tested. Consequently, there are prominent examples of excellent experiences in relation to cooperation, including successful and coordinated arrest operations, on occasions involving more than one jurisdiction. At the same time, the execution of some arrest warrants has been pending for many years, and in some cases, well over a decade. An important lesson has been that because of the permanence of the ICC, even cooperation requests that have been inactive for a long period of time can suddenly be executed when a shift in the circumstances allows for it.

Going forward, it is crucial to look at the present and future challenges having in mind the experience the Court has gained over the past two decades. This is even more important as the Court engages in cases and situations with new complexities that can further test political support and cooperation. Executing warrants of arrest, conducting effective financial investigations, ensuring the protection of witnesses, ensuring cooperation with the defence and legal representatives for victims, may become even more challenging.

Having said this, in addressing future challenges, I believe the solution from the Court's perspective is to continue building on the experience, efforts and processes already identified. As such, the Court should continue and increase its reliance on expert networks that can facilitate engagement with a variety of key stakeholders, including States Parties.

In regards to States Parties, the Court must continue its efforts to raise awareness of its cooperation and support requirements both at the operational and political level. Through such efforts, the relevant actors can become better acquainted with the procedural specificities of the Rome Statute, in particular in areas where the ICC model differs from the model of mutual legal assistance States are mostly familiar with. The Court continues to gather important experience on the technical challenges faced by States when the ICC procedures require processes normally not available at the national level. Experience in this regard shows that when familiarized with the specificities of the system, cooperation is more forthcoming. The importance of States adopting implementing legislation pursuant to Part 9 of the Rome Statute cannot be overemphasized.

When it comes to voluntary cooperation, it is even more important to rely on robust political support. Building diverse coalitions of supportive actors can foster a more cohesive approach to voluntary cooperation and promote a more balanced sharing of the burden. The requirements of the Court for voluntary forms of cooperation will only increase both in quantity and complexity in the future. The Court is already experiencing difficulties to ensure the protection and relocation of witnesses and, with investigations growing in complexity, the Registry will be called upon to ensuring the safety and security of witnesses in even more volatile environments with heightened risk factors. It is therefore urgent to expand the scope of countries that enter into relocation agreements with the Court, and for the Registry to rely on a support system among States Parties in which the burden is shared among themselves and the Court can count on available sometimes short notice solutions.

Another constant challenge for the Court will remain securing cooperation for release, including interim and final release. This is a considerable difficulty which has been experienced also by *ad hoc* and internationalized tribunals. Considering the very limited support currently received by the Court on the signing of agreements on these voluntary forms of cooperation, we must consider that these challenges will remain valid in the near future. Importantly, with regards to cooperation with the defence, the Registry has the responsibility to safeguard the equality of arms by ensuring effective access and support in relation to their requests for cooperation.

Certainly, the Court must continue and enhance its efforts to support and facilitate the ability of States to provide cooperation. Such efforts may include supporting the efforts of the Assembly on complementarity, enhancing the access to networks and databases, and promoting the sharing of expertise and knowledge between States that have the expertise and those States that are willing to cooperate, but that lack the expertise or the capacity. It is of strategic importance for the Court to channel and galvanize opportunities for cross-fertilization of technical capacity in order to encourage cooperation among willing stakeholders.

Having said that, political support will remain an essential pillar for the activation of cooperation agreements and arrangements. As the Registrar acts as the channel of communication between Judges and States in order to seek their cooperation, the Registrar must promote an environment that fosters trust and respect for the Court and its work in a manner conducive to a constructive dialogue based on common principles and objectives.

Experience in budgetary processes:

11. Please describe your experience preparing and being responsible for a large budget, including whether you have experience in working with a results-based budgeting system and with gender responsive budgeting. What strategies would you undertake in relation to the preparation, submission and examination of the ICC budget to ensure support by the Committee on Budget and Finance and states parties?

Through my continued involvement in the Court's programme budget for the past twelve years, I have developed a deep understanding of the budget process and the operations of the Court, as well as of how the whole budget life cycle needs to be seen in its policy context and strategic consequences. My work in relation to the Court's budget has allowed me to demonstrate a significant level of mastery of its technical complexities, a profound understanding of the operational realities behind the figures, as well as my skills for analysis and accuracy.

Currently, I serve the ICC as its Chief of the Budget Section. In this capacity, I oversee the overall implementation of the Court's budget, which presently amounts to €151.3 million. In this regard, I am responsible for providing control to Court resources by ensuring sound management practices through policies, procedures, standards, strategies and plans relating to the control of budget implementation and developing refinements to Court-wide systems.

Concerning the Registry's budget, I am directly responsible for its strategic implementation, ensuring a proper prioritization and, as appropriate, reprogramming of resources to support the high-level priorities of the Court and address changing priorities and operational developments and needs stemming from the judicial nature of the mandate of the Court. I am responsible for reviewing and analyzing the data and trends to identify deficiencies or redundancies in the administration of the Court and encourage remedial action and enhancements to ensure the best economical use of resources. I am also responsible for providing high level authoritative advice and guidance to the Coordination Council with regard to budgetary practices, prioritization of resources, and the preparation of budget proposals.

Furthermore, as part of my responsibilities, I manage the annual budget process for the Court through the creation of guidelines and yearly objectives for budget holders, devising policy implications and ways to effectively prioritize budgetary requirements with a view to ensuring business continuity, and aligning the budget process more clearly with strategic planning and risk management. I also ensure the strategic communication and representation of the Court's budgetary policies, strategies and plans vis-à-vis States Parties and external stakeholders, in particular in the context of the budget cycle with the Assembly.

As I explained in an article on the Court's budgetary process⁴, the budget of the ICC is the means for the effective implementation of its mandate, the means through which it can achieve its strategic goals and operational objectives. In this regard, arguing for the cost-effectiveness of the Court as a model mechanism of international justice, is not enough if the Court as an organization is not seen as the most efficient version of itself. The budget

⁴ Zavala, Osvaldo, *The Budgetary Efficiency of the International Criminal Court*, International Criminal Law Review, 2018, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 461-488.

and its process are therefore crucial to uphold the legitimacy of the organization, as the means through which the Court puts forward in a credible manner the most efficient and effective way to deliver its mandate. This cannot be evident unless the budget and the budget process are able to transparently convey not only the level of resources required to put into effect the Court's ambitious mandate, but also the measures put in place to contain costs and ensure sustainability.

Therefore, the budget preparation and management at the Court is fundamentally not a mere technical accounting process. The budget essentially brings together two things: an essential understanding of the opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the institution, and an technical understanding of the impact of the budget on operational delivery. Over the years, I have demonstrated a very refined understanding of the policy issues that the budget needs to address and a deep understanding of the operational impact of the budget. I have consistently brought these two issues together in my work, and present them in a credible and coherent manner to stakeholders within the Registry, across the organs of the Court, with the budget scrutiny mechanisms and the Assembly.

There are two main drivers from which the Court's activities develop: judicial proceedings and investigations by the OTP. Each driver triggers a different set of activities and operations within the Court, and has a different impact on the overall budget. Since 2016, the Assembly has continuously stressed the importance of the fullest implementation of the "One-Court-principle" when establishing the proposed programme budget, including in particular by improving the way in which the Principals' high-level strategic vision guides the budgetary process from the outset. Effectively, this means that instead of the process being initiated by a list of activities and requirements drawn independently by the Judiciary and the OTP and submitted to the Registry for compilation and assessment of its budgetary implications, the process should be initiated with an agreement at the Coordination Council on the high-level priorities that would drive resource requirements in the following year's budget.

While to a large extent this has been achieved, improvements in the linkage between the budget and the strategic priorities of the Court can be attained by anchoring the budget process on more meaningful KPIs. The move towards a Result-based budgeting (RBB) model will ensure a more streamlined, cohesive and coherent budget process whereby budget priorities are derived from Strategic Plan and risk management. This would require first and foremost a true and meaningful alignment of the strategic planning, risk management, budget and operational planning processes within the Court, driven from the same governance cycles. Currently, the strategic plan and the budget processes run parallel and the risk register is not connected to the budgetary requirements. Relying on more relevant KPIs to sustain the budget process would allow the Court to present a more meaningful high-level allocation of resources, instead of allocating resources to categories of activities that are not used in planning or reporting. Currently, KPIs are included in an annex of the proposed budget, but do not connect with narratives and justifications, and are not linked to strategic goals achievements. I believe that moving towards an RBB model would enhance the implementation of the One-Court Principle by shifting the focus of budget process and implementation on the Court's performance in achieving strategic goals.

Finally, since this year I have been actively involved in evaluating ways to introduce gender-responsive budgeting methodologies to the analysis of the implementation of the Court's budget, and consequently on the planning of resources. Together with the Court's Focal Point of Gender Equality, and in supporting the efforts and initiatives of the Judges' Working Group on Gender issues, I have been in contact with key stakeholders and experts to discuss practical and concrete ways to start looking at budgetary trends and data from a gender perspective. This has been possible with the support of Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, a key and constructive partner in these efforts. While a lot of work still needs to be done, planning is already underway to identify some key budgetary outputs and develop tools to analyze their implementation from a gender lens as of next year. I am convinced that by understanding how the Court's expenditures currently link to gender dynamics within the Court, we will be able to address systemic issues in a more relevant way and introduce more appropriate corrective measures. The continued implementation of this and other strategic initiatives devised to improve the Court will remain among my priorities if elected Registrar.

Thank you.