



Coalition for the international Criminal Court
23rd session of the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC Rome Statute
2-7 December 2024

General Debate Statement

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with honor that I address you today as the Director of the Secretariat for the Coalition for the ICC.

The Coalition is the world's largest civil society partnership. We are represented at this ASP session by more than 250 individual human rights defenders from all around the world. The high number of delegates and the remarkable scale of side events being held this week clearly highlights the dedication of human rights defenders who travel great distances to engage with you and support this movement for justice. These are challenging times for the ICC and the Rome Statute system, yet the commitment of civil society remains steadfast.

Human rights defenders who cooperate with the Court face immense challenges in their fight to bring justice to victims and for their work in support of the Rome Statute system. Many of our colleagues face threats and reprisals against themselves, their families, and their colleagues because of their work. We call on States Parties and the ASP as a whole, to protect and defend civil society and human rights defenders who are at risk because of their work on international justice and engagement with the ICC. We welcome the words of support for civil society and human rights defenders heard throughout the opening plenary and the general debate, and we further call on the Assembly and the Court to give full effect to these words by taking measures to ensure this engagement can be effective.

In the face of continuing and serious threats and sanctions against the Court its officials and those cooperating with it, your collective diplomatic and practical support for the Court is also critical. We call on States Parties to be united and strong, and to oppose and condemn any attempt to undermine the ICC's independence and work through sanctions and other measures. To this end, we call on your governments to both support the Court diplomatically and to adopt concrete measures in this regard.

Today, more than ever, we recall the vital role of victims in the Rome Statute system – it is for them that the ICC was created. States Parties have a crucial role to play in supporting the meaningful participation of victims in the Rome Statute System, and that means, among other things, ensuring



sufficient and sustainable resources for the Court. The lack of sufficient resources and support for the entire Court risks having a profound impact on victims' participation, access to information, and redress. In these dire times, the principles and commitments of the Rome Statute are more crucial than ever. This ASP session should serve as a key forum for your governments to demonstrate to victims around the world your resolve to uphold the role of the ICC in the wider international justice system and enforce the principles of complementarity and cooperation.

Despite the many challenges we face today, the Rome Statute system remains a crucial avenue for meaningful justice: notably, on January 1, 2025 Ukraine will become the 125th state party to the Rome Statute, an important step to reduce the impunity gap and encouragement to other states to join this global effort. Congratulations and welcome to Ukraine, and also to Armenia, the Court's newest State Party. Congratulations and welcome also to the newly elected representatives and elected officials of the Assembly expert bodies.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

International justice continues to be a global priority. Today, victims and survivors around the world hold the ICC as a strong symbol of hope. The success of the Court and the Rome Statute system cannot depend on the institution alone - it depends on you, its States Parties, and on the decisions and commitments you will make in the next days.