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Remarks by Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice to the Committee on Budget and Finance
delivered by Valeria Babără, Legal and Advocacy Officer

Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice has been monitoring and analysing the institutional development of the International Criminal Court (ICC) from a gender perspective for more than 15 years. We have always invested in monitoring the Court as a global public institution based on the very simple premise that without a sound and stable structure, the ICC will not be able to deliver on its substantive mandate to prosecute international crimes.

Today I would like to bring to your attention the issue of gender responsive budgeting, a topic we have raised with the Committee before in writing.

In our view, the ongoing discussions in the context of the Review Mechanism, the draft Strategy on Gender Equality and Workplace Culture, but also the unprecedented contributions to the ICC budget – all provide a good opportunity to first examine how gender attuned the ICC budget is, and then potentially implement changes for its improvement.

As you might know, a gender responsive budget aims to reduce existing patterns of systematic inequality by allocating resources to address gaps identified in a gender analysis of the Court's goals and objectives, to ensure that people of all genders benefit from resources equitably.

I would like to emphasise that gender responsive budgeting should not be seen as creating an additional budget or implying a budget increase, but rather as better budget planning based on specific evidence regarding the beneficiaries of resources, and more equitably using existing financial and other types of resources, including staff time.

Such improved budgeting also leads to the increased effectiveness of an organisation, easier monitoring of achievements, advancement on good governance standards, and an enhancement of accountability and transparency.

The ICC, as a key institution in international criminal justice and the promotion of accountability, is encouraged to set high standards for mainstreaming gender in all areas of its work.

As such, Women's Initiatives is in discussion with the Registry and the Focal Point for Gender Equality on this topic and is keen to start a discussion with the CBF as well. We stand ready to offer expertise, training, assistance in drafting a gender action plan and other support as needed and encourage states parties to share relevant best practices from their national jurisdictions.

To conclude, I would also want to echo my colleagues' concerns about the need for sufficient and sustainable funding for the Court.

Thank you.