

**ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES TO THE ROME STATUTE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
5TH SESSION**

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN WENAWESER,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

THE HAGUE, 24 NOVEMBER 2006

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

We would like to thank you and the Bureau for giving us the possibility of sharing our views during a general debate. We consider this debate an appropriate way of opening this Assembly of States Parties, which has a broad range of responsibilities, far beyond budgetary issues, and which should provide political support to the ICC. We thank the President of the ICC, Mr. Philippe Kirsch, and the Prosecutor, Mr. Luis Moreno Ocampo, for their presentation of the report on the activities of the Court. We are generally very satisfied with the way the Court has developed since the entry into force of the Rome Statute more than four years ago. The various organs of the Court and their staff have continued to exercise their functions with great competence and dedication, while safeguarding in particular the principles of independence and complementarity. The problems experienced, on the other hand, clearly show that the Court continues to struggle to find its place in the landscape of international institutions, and that the cooperation extended by States and international organizations needs to be improved. While cooperation in arrest and surrender is obviously the most pressing issue, other forms of cooperation are needed as well, including for the protection of witnesses.

The International Criminal Court itself has set an example in terms of international cooperation. The assistance provided by the ICC to the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Independent International Investigation Commission under Security Council resolution 1595 (2005) is remarkable in many respects. We are therefore confident that cooperation will be reciprocated and continue to improve. In this respect we note with great satisfaction the establishment of the ICC Liaison Office in New York.

Mr. President,

We look forward to another productive session of the Assembly of States Parties. We are pleased that the Assembly now has sufficient time allocated for the conduct of its business, and that this session has been well prepared by the Court, the Committee on Budget and Finance as well as the Bureau and its Working Groups. We would like to thank the Court and CBF for the excellent work done in preparing our budget discussions, and for the progress made on strategic planning, including through the Court Capacity Model. These tools and processes underline that the ICC, only three years after starting its operations, is a highly professional and modern organization striving for the greatest efficiency. We hope that all States Parties will acknowledge

these efforts in the upcoming budget negotiations and provide the Court with the reasonable resources requested. We also expect that decisive steps be taken to ensure that the Court will benefit from appropriate permanent premises which not only respond efficiently to practical needs, but also serve as a symbol for this historic enterprise. Finally, we call on all States to remain committed to the financial health of the Court, and to pay their contributions in full at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr. President

This ASP will also give us an opportunity to address the question of the Review Conference. The year 2009 is not far away, and the first procedural steps for the preparation of that Conference must be taken very soon. With a view to attracting further ratifications, the outcome of our negotiations on the crime of aggression will be an important element, since many potential States Parties participate in or closely observe the respective developments. We are pleased to note that the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression has made considerable progress during the last few years, in particular during intersessional meetings. The last such meeting, held in June 2006 at the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University, can be considered the most successful and productive so far. We look forward to the consideration of its report during this ASP, and during the resumed session to be held in New York in January 2007.

We are satisfied that the ASP last year chose New York as the venue for the work on the crime of aggression, with a view to facilitating universal participation in these meetings. In fact, we believe that the participation of the greatest possible number of States in the overall work of the ASP will be particularly important in the years leading to the Review Conference, and should guide us in taking decisions on that matter. The ASP must continue to be an organ which can provide the broadest possible support for the Court, while remaining open for all States which have not yet ratified or acceded to the Rome Statute. We warmly welcome the recent ratifications of the Rome Statute, which bring the number of States Parties to 104, but further progress is needed. The fight against impunity, and the quest for justice for the worst crimes, such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, requires the active support by the international community as a whole. Nothing less than universal ratification of the Rome Statute must remain our goal.

I thank you.