

New York, 24 June 2011

Accession of Tunisia to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Christian Wenaweser President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

I am pleased to welcome Tunisia as the first North African State Party of the Rome Statute, the fourth member of the Arab League and the 116th State overall to join the Rome Statute.

Ratifying this founding document of the International Criminal Court has become a symbol of a country's commitment to the rule of law and the fight against impunity. I am very pleased to see that Tunisia has decided to send this strong message as an expression of a future on the basis of the rule of law. This is especially true for the most serious crimes under international law: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and aggression.

Tunisia's accession to the Rome Statute is also a testament of the profound changes brought about by the "Arab Spring," which started in Tunisia. It fulfills a central demand of peoples everywhere for societies guided by clear rules and the principle of equality before the law.

I hope very much that other countries will follow the very important example Tunisia is setting today.
