

## **23rd Session of the Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court**

### **Closing Statement of the Coalition for the International Criminal Court**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with honour that I address you today on behalf of the Coalition for the ICC as a new member of the Coalition's Steering Committee.

The Coalition is the world's largest civil society partnership. We are here as a delegation of human rights defenders and organizations committed to international justice and the fight against impunity. As we have heard repeatedly over the past five days, this is a critical moment for the ICC and the Rome Statute system, and yet, the commitment of civil society remains steadfast.

As you have seen during the session, there is tremendous interest in the work of the Court. With situations in countries across the globe, the reach of the court has grown significantly, and with it, the number of victims and survivors hoping for justice. Through our interventions in plenary debates and side events, civil society voices have raised the importance of meaningfully engaging victims at the Court, concerns about double standards, and the need for sufficient resources for the court. We will continue to engage with you towards these ends, and express our concern, that once again, the budget agreed by states parties pales in comparison to the work before it.

Crucially, we have heard over the last five days the need to ensure that the work of the court can simply continue in the face of potential sanctions and other concrete efforts to undermine the institution. We recall our Coalition statement to the cooperation plenary and urge you, the court's states parties, to speak up in defence of the court's vital work, to be crystal clear in your firm commitment to your obligations under the Rome Statute, including on arrests, and to be prepared to protect the court, its staff, and all those cooperating with it from the effects of sanctions. If ever

there was a moment to come together in solidarity in the movement for international justice, it is now.

As civil society, we know that threats to the Court go hand in hand with threats to those who defend the Court, and as front-line human rights defenders, we are acutely aware of the high stakes of this moment. For this reason, we must stand more firm than ever in our support to victims, to those for whom this court was created. We must commit to ensuring that the spirit of the Rome Statute is carried forward, and not undermined at a time when we need it the most.