

**EXCERPTS FROM THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE  
62<sup>nd</sup> SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
25 SEPTEMBER – 3 OCTOBER 2007**

The General Assembly held a General Debate during its 62<sup>nd</sup> session from 25 September 2007 to 3 October 2007. Of the States representatives making statements, 14 made specific reference to the ICC: Australia, Benin, Costa Rica, Denmark, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Portugal (on behalf of the European Union), Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago and Uganda.

In addition, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and 2 other states made indirect references to the ICC, mentioning the need for international justice and putting an end to impunity: Argentina and Rwanda.

The excerpts below (in the order they were made) have been compiled by the Coalition for the International Criminal Court. The full texts of these speeches are available at:  
<http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/62/index.shtml>.

**25 SEPTEMBER 2007**

**UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon**

“I will strive to translate the concept of our Responsibility to Protect from words to deeds, to ensure timely action so that populations do not face genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Our international tribunals continue their work, from Rwanda to Sierra Leone and, soon, Lebanon. The age of impunity is dead.”

**Portugal** (*on behalf of the European Union*)

“Peace also depends on our capacity to ensure that justice knows no frontiers, and we shall never fail in our defense of the Responsibility to Protect, for we believe that the inalienable rights of the individual need the protection of the international mechanisms. We support the International Criminal Court, and we call for the universal ratification of the Rome Statute. We stress the need for cooperation by both member states and non-member states with the Court in general, and as regards the execution of arrest warrants in specific.”

- *H.E. Mr. José Sócrates, Prime Minister of the Republic of Portugal*

**Argentina**

“We will work to ensure the respect for the state of law. We will take decisions to combat impunity. We also condemn those who have violated human rights and have received impunity. There have been threats to witnesses. We condemn all of these acts. In the past we spoke about the violation of human rights in Argentina, but we wish to punish those who are guilty now and defend human rights worldwide.” (*Quotation transcribed from English translation of webcast speech.*)

- *H.E. Mr. Néstor Carlos Kirchner, President of the Republic of Argentina*

\*\*\*\*\*

**26 SEPTEMBER 2007**

**Switzerland**

“Let us not be mistaken, there can be no peace or security without international justice. In this

context, Switzerland supports the work of the International Criminal Court. Its permanent nature and the possibility of the Security Council referring certain situations to the Court – as it did in the case of Darfur – confer on this institution a power of prevention. For this power to be effective however, the Court must have the full support of the international community, which must make sure that all governments concerned cooperate fully.”

- *H.E. Mrs. Micheline Calmy-Rey, President of the Swiss Confederation*

\*\*\*\*\*

**27 SEPTEMBER 2007**

### **Rwanda**

“Let me briefly touch on a number of pressing challenges the global community currently faces. While our continent has been consolidating peace and security, there are persistent problem areas that need attention. Today, in the Great Lakes Region, forces that committed genocide in Rwanda in 1994 continue their destructive operations. Almost fourteen years after their deeds in our country, they are still sowing mayhem in the region - they rape, murder, terrorize and plunder with impunity. Their leaders are active in Europe, America, and Africa where they continue to promote the ideology of genocide. There can be no doubt that these terror groups constitute a threat to international peace and security. The presence of the costly United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has not diminished their activities.

I once again call upon the International Community, in collaboration with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to end the threat posed by these negative forces once and for all. Rwandans and the region as a whole need peace and stability so that we can concentrate on the business of economic growth and development.”

-*H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda*

### **The Netherlands**

“Respect for human rights and the rule of law is our deepest motive and our highest aspiration. Our diversity rests on this unity. We should not hesitate to hold one another to account. [...]

In 2005 the United Nations adopted the principle of 'responsibility to protect'. In doing so, we sided with all those suffering from genocide or crimes against humanity. It is now time to put that principle into practice. [...]

We need to strengthen the rule of law and put an end to impunity. We are not yet making full use of the instruments we have. I say this as Prime Minister of a country that is proud to have the legal capital of the world – The Hague – within its borders. Without justice, there can be no lasting peace and no reconciliation.

We would like to see the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court accepted more widely.

We stress the need for cooperation by both Member and non-Member States with the International Criminal Court in general and with regard to the execution of arrest warrants in particular.

The Netherlands will continue to make a special effort to promote the international legal order. That is why we have responded positively to the Secretary-General's request to host the Lebanon tribunal in the Netherlands. Preparations for this tribunal are in full swing.”

*-H.E. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands*

\*\*\*\*\*

**28 SEPTEMBER 2007**

### **Luxembourg**

“I’d like to mention in this context also the essential dimension of reconciliation and combating impunity. While applauding particularly the action of the various international courts and in particular the International Criminal Court. As regards to the protection and promotion of the human rights, which is one of the key focuses of Luxembourg’s foreign policy, I continue to vest great hope in the new Human Rights Council, which has just finished setting up its new institutional structures.” (*Quotation transcribed from English translation of webcast speech*)

*-H.E. Mr. Jean Asselborn, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of Luxembourg*

### **Benin**

“The proliferation of non-state armed groups, widespread violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes against civilian populations, particularly against women and children in situations of conflict must continue to be given our unswerving attention. Perpetrators of these crimes need to be tried by the International Criminal Court, whose role as a deterrent needs to be enhanced by greater cooperation with the Security Council and use of the practice of full jurisdiction.” (*Quotation transcribed from English translation of webcast speech*)

*-H.E. Dr. Moussa Okanla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Benin*

### **Japan**

“It is extremely regrettable that the crackdown on the demonstrations in Myanmar has caused casualties, including the death of a Japanese citizen. Japan calls on the Government of Myanmar to exercise utmost restraint and to refrain from the use of oppressive force. Japan demands that the Government of Myanmar make every effort to resolve the situation through dialogue.

Along with democracy, the rule of law helps to lay the groundwork for peace and prosperity. To promote the rule of law in the international community, Japan will accede to the International Criminal Court (ICC) next month, while helping to improve legal systems in developing countries.”

*-H.E. Mr. Masahiko Mihai Koumura, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan*

\*\*\*\*\*

**1 OCTOBER 2007**

### **Liechtenstein**

“The past few years have not brought about the era of the rule of law that some had hoped for. Quite to the contrary, there have been concerted and ultimately unsuccessful attacks on the importance of the rule of law in international relations. Nevertheless, we have achieved very significant progress in some areas, in particular in the area of international criminal justice. The Security Council has led the way through the establishment of international and hybrid tribunals, but the crowning success was of course the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The referral of the situation in Darfur to the Court was a landmark decision, both legally and politically. It was a strong message by the Security Council that the international community does not accept impunity for the most serious crimes under international law. This statement, however, needs to be backed up by

enforcement action, in particular by the arrest of all indictees sought by the Court. We therefore call on all States and the United Nations to cooperate with the ICC to that effect.”

*-H.E. Ms. Rita Kieber-Beck, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein*

### **Uganda**

“In Northern Uganda we are holding peace talks with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Of the five Agenda items, two Agreements have been concluded and signed. These are the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and the Agreement on Comprehensive Solutions. However, the LRA has not met any of the terms of the very first Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. For example, it is stipulated that LRA forces assemble at Ri-Kwangba in Southern Sudan. They have however not done this. They are still camped in Garamba National park in the DRC. We urge the international community to bring adequate pressure to bear on the LRA to assemble at Ri-Kwangba and to put a timeframe on the talks. Talks cannot go on forever. As we inch towards a comprehensive peace agreement, international support and understanding is required to balance the need for durable peace and stability on one hand and the imperative for justice on the other.

I wish to assure the General Assembly that Uganda is fully aware of her obligations under the Rome Statute and can not undermine it. She can not condone impunity. To this end we are working closely with ICC to ensure accountability under the complementarity stipulations.

Uganda will be convening a Consultative Group Meeting later this year to mobilize resources and coordinate actions for the Post Conflict Reconciliation Programme in Northern Uganda. The International Community is invited to support this Programme.”

*-H.E. Mr. Sam K. Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda*

\*\*\*\*\*

**2 OCTOBER 2007**

### **Costa Rica**

“Multilateralism requires a shared sense of justice. For that, we need more States to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). As we advance towards the universality of the Statute, and the acceptance of its complementary jurisdiction, we will close the nooks and gaps where the worst criminals known to man currently hide.”

*- H.E. Mr. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Costa Rica*

### **Peru**

“The international reality raises multiple challenges to the universal system of promotion and protection of human rights. It subsists the dichotomy between security and individual liberties and, on the other hand, the poverty and inequity in which the large majorities of the planet live affect the human dignity. [...] One of the great achievements in recent years is the entrance in force of the Statute of Rome, and the subsequent implementation of the International Criminal Court. This is a large step against impunity and the promotion of justice and peace. Peru has participated active and constructively since the genesis of this effort and now it is determined to adapt its internal legislation to the stipulated norms by the Statute. It is still pending the definition of some aspects, as the case of the crime of aggression. We expect results in the negotiations before the Review Conference.”

*- H.E. Mr. Gonzalo Gutiérrez Reinol, Vice Minister Secretary-General of Foreign Affairs of Peru*

## **Denmark**

“It is a key goal for the Danish Government to promote good governance, democracy and human rights with no impunity for crimes against humanity and we will do this through an active foreign policy. Denmark will seriously do its best to contribute to a more effective UN - and to assist countries that have a strong commitment to development, but lack the necessary resources. [...]

In Sudan, we have an obligation to help the people of Darfur achieve peace through the restoration of stability. The killings, violence and atrocities must end. This has taken far too long. There is now finally some progress in the attempts to find a solution to the conflict in Darfur. We have a responsibility to ensure it is implemented. Denmark actively supports the UN-AU Hybrid Force as well as the resumed political process. It raises real hope for improving the deplorable situation on the ground and the prospect for a long-term political solution. As part of this process we must implement ICC arrest warrants and bring perpetrators of crime to justice.”

- *H.E. Ambassador Carsten Staur, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations*

## **Australia**

“As members of the United Nations, we have set ourselves important goals over the past 62 years: maintaining global peace and security, supporting economic and social development and advancing human rights. In 2005 we pledged to protect those people who are most vulnerable – those facing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. We recognised the 'responsibility to protect' as a central tenet of our shared humanity.

This 'responsibility to protect' underpins the notion that States must protect their own populations. But if they should fail to do so, the international community has a responsibility to act; not to stand idly by in the face of atrocity, genocide or ethnic cleansing. [...]

Last year the Security Council drew upon the responsibility to protect for the first time in a country-specific resolution, Resolution 1706 on Darfur. [...]

But resolving the tragedy in Darfur is, first and foremost, a test for the Government of Sudan and other parties to the conflict. Ongoing military operations by the Government of Sudan — and last weekend's killing and abduction of African Union peacekeepers by rebel forces — demonstrate the urgent need for the parties to stop these crimes and build peace. Those who have committed crimes in Darfur must be punished.

Australia calls on the Government of Sudan to act on the warrants issued by the International Criminal Court. We call on Sudan to arrest Minister of State for Humanitarian Affairs, Ahmad Harun, and militia leader Ali Kushayb and hand them over to the Court.

Darfur is not the only humanitarian crisis we have experienced or will face in the United Nations. Tragically, other populations will also require protection from crimes against humanity. The responsibility to protect provides the necessary guide to action. But it is up to Security Council members, on behalf of the international community, to act, and for all UN members to support them.”

- *H.E. Ambassador Robert Hill, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations*

\*\*\*\*\*

**3 OCTOBER 2007**

### **New Zealand**

“Mr. President, Advancement of the rule of law at the national and international levels is essential for the realisation of sustained economic growth, development and human rights.

New Zealand encourages members to provide their full support to the International Criminal Court by acceding to the Rome Statute of the ICC. We also call on all UN Member States, especially States Parties to the Rome Statute, to fully cooperate with the Court in carrying out its current work. Universality and our full support are crucial if we are to end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of international concern, such as those carried out in Darfur where ICC arrest warrants are outstanding.

- *H.E. Ambassador Rosemary Banks, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations*

### **Trinidad and Tobago**

“Peace and justice are, however, inextricably linked and there can be no lasting peace in Darfur without accountability for the heinous crimes committed against the people of Darfur during the conflict [...] It is this confidence in and respect for the International Rule of Law which encouraged Trinidad and Tobago since the late 1980s to campaign, at the highest political levels, for the establishment of an International Criminal Court (ICC). We are keenly aware of the important strides being made by the ICC, as it devotes its attention to the prosecution of individuals accused of committing the crimes within its jurisdiction, namely, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

19. Trinidad and Tobago recalls in this connection the adoption at the Rome Conference of the Resolution recommending that a Review Conference of the Court's Statute consider the inclusion of trafficking in illegal drugs on an international scale within the Court's jurisdiction. We must seize the opportunity now dictated by international trends to engage fully the ICC in efforts to stem the tide of this scourge and similarly to consider the inclusion of terrorism, once that term is clearly defined by the international community.

20. Our approach will be grounded in the recognition of the continued deleterious effects which the international trade in illegal drugs is having on the social fabric of societies the world over, including in the Caribbean. The time has come for the international community to recognize the illicit trafficking of drugs as an international crime subject to the jurisdiction of the ICC.”

- *H.E. Ambassador Philip Sealy, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations*

\*\*\*\*\*