Presentation to the Trust Fund for Victims Board of Directors
17 March 2015

Excellencies, good morning,

I would like to thank you and the Trust Fund Secretariat for the invitation extended to civil society to address the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims today to give some introductory remarks.

It is an honour for the Coalition and its members to be given this yearly opportunity to address such a distinguished and experienced panel and to engage in an open dialogue with you, united in your commitment to the Trust Fund and to victims of the worst crimes.

I wish to stress that the Coalition also views this dialogue today as a way to foster the relationship between civil society and the TFV and its Board and to serve as a platform for further engagement between you and other Coalition members and colleagues, who are not based in The Hague or could for other reasons not be here today.

I would also like to thank you for the opportunity to address you at the very beginning of your Board meeting, as this year, you more than ever have many very important decisions to take.

I am joined today by two colleagues from the NGO community, both of whom are an essential part of the Coalition’s work on the Trust Fund for Victims:

- Ms. Carrie Comer of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), who recently joined us
- Mr. John Doyle of Amnesty International.

They are here to address you on the activities of their respective organisations in particular in relation to the Trust Fund.

One of the most important agenda items of your meeting this week is the implementation of the reparations order. You all have a very important task ahead of you in the next six months and beyond. The Coalition and its members, networks and partners are ready to support you in any way we can.

Contributions

Moving forward this year, it will remain the Coalition’s strong commitment to work together with States Parties, the primary custodians of the Rome Statute, in order to fulfil their commitment and responsibility to victims of the crimes that fall within the Court’s jurisdiction. In particular, the current financial climate is not a justification to a lower level of support to the Fund or its secretariat. We will continue to stress with states that small but steady contributions are important. Also, States Parties may find ways to actively promote and support initiatives for private donations to the TFV. But there is also support to the budget of the secretariat is that is always of great importance, but even more so this year when the secretariat will
be under tremendous pressure following the Reparations decision in the Lubanga and Katanga cases respectively.

**Fundraising officer**

The Coalition’s Team on the TFV also welcomed the appointment of a Fundraising and Visibility Officer in 2015 and although we agree that the Assembly should monitor the effectiveness of the post to ensure that this investment achieves the desired results we also raised with the states that it is also important that the Assembly’s expectations of what can be achieved in this period of time are realistic, given the initial effort that is normally required for developing fundraising strategies and materials. Additional time may be required until this investment begins to generate significant results.

**Strategic Plan**

In our dialogue last year one of the main points of discussion was the Strategic Plan. We welcomed the adoption of the plan in August last year and called on states parties, especially at the ASP in New York in December, to voice their support for its implementation. The Coalition’s Team on the Trust Fund particularly noted and brought to the attention of states parties the following five points of the Strategic Plan:

- Strengthening the TFV’s field based coordination and management oversight of its programmes, in particular from Bunia, DRC, given that both the reparations and general assistance mandates are likely to be operational in eastern DRC in the next three years;

- Incorporate gender perspectives throughout its programmes, the importance of which was extensively set out by Ms Kalla yesterday evening.

- Ensure the TFV’s financial sustainability and the development of its resources through voluntary contributions, private donations and fines and forfeitures.

- Further develop the Fund’s communications and outreach initiatives to enhance its and the Court’s visibility, generate support, and encourage financial contributions.

- Develop its structures in order to implement the reparations principles set by the Court in the Lubanga case.

**Elections**

As part of the Coalition’s campaign on elections, we will raise attention to the Board elections this year and encourage states and others to put forward names of candidates. As such we would welcome to hear your recommendations to assist in seeking out possible candidates.
Before closing these introductory remarks, please be assured that the Coalition and its members will continue to work hard to promote the work of the Trust Fund, promote its visibility and to encourage voluntary contributions in 2015 and beyond. We place critical importance on your work as we feel it is through the Trust Fund that verdicts of the Court can truly resonate and have the most meaningful effect on victims and affected communities.

Excellencies, thank you again for this opportunity to address you today and I look forward to a fruitful exchange both today and throughout the year.

Alix Vuillemin Grendel
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