

31 October 2016

**71<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly**

**Statement by H.E. Peter Thomson,  
Report of the International Criminal Court**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome Her Excellency Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, President of the International Criminal Court, to the General Assembly.

It has been 18 years since countries from every region of our world came together in Rome, and resolved that bearing in mind, the millions of children, women and men who have been victims of unimaginable atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity, and recognizing that such grave crimes threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world, decided that for the sake of present and future generations to establish the International Criminal Court, with jurisdiction over the most serious crimes of concern to the international community in order to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes and thus to contribute to the prevention of such crimes.

In the nearly two decades that have since passed, the international community's conscience continues to be shocked by the atrocities that are being perpetrated against innocent victims each day.

It is imperative therefore that we draw on the spirit that led to the establishment of the Court to strengthen – and not diminish – our resolve to put an end to the impunity of the perpetrators of these crimes.

I encourage particularly States parties to continue to work to promote the effective functioning of the Court, and the universality of the Rome Statute.

This is a time when we should reflect on the important place of the Court in the international system in promoting the rule of law and protecting human rights.

And we should remember that whatever our status may be with respect to the Court, that we are all united around a common belief: that some crimes are so serious that it calls on our collective conscience to act, in order to put an end to the impunity of those perpetrating those crimes.

The victims deserve and demand nothing less from us all.