

Speech by Motoo Noguchi
Chair of the Board of Directors
The Trust Fund for Victims at the ICC
Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Rome Statute
The Hague, 17 July 2018

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims at the ICC.

The promise of justice under the Rome Statute is for the dignity and well-being of victims who suffer the greatest harms from unspeakable crimes. The Trust Fund for Victims is a unique feature of the Rome Statute, specifically designed to bring justice to victims under the jurisdiction of the Court.

Over the past decade, the Trust Fund has provided physical and psychological rehabilitation and material support to more than 400,000 victims. This includes: vocational training and education for former child soldiers; trauma-based counselling, health care and financing for victims of sexual and gender based violence; and conflict mediation for communities seeking resilience against reoccurrence.

In the last few years, there has also been a remarkable development under the Trust Fund's reparations mandate. At present there are three reparations orders to be implemented, namely in the *Lubanga*, *Katanga* and *Al Mahdi* cases. The Trust Fund is contributing to the establishment of an implementation mechanism that is both legally sound and operationally viable.

As the convicted persons are indigent in all three cases, the Trust Fund's Board of Directors has decided to financially enable the implementation of the reparations orders by complementing the orders entirely or partially.

Victims are at the receiving end of the crimes adjudicated before the Court. They must have ownership of the remedies for the harms suffered, because they know what they need and how best to achieve it.

As such, the Trust Fund will continue to use its two mandates in a way that best suits the circumstances of each situation. For example, following the acquittal of Mr Bemba last month, the Trust Fund is accelerating the relaunch of its assistance mandate programme in the Central African Republic. The priority will be put on addressing the harms suffered by victims in the Bemba case and victims of sexual and gender based violence in the CAR I situation as a whole.

All the work of the Trust Fund is being achieved with very modest organisational and financial means, supported by carefully selected implementing partners who enjoy the trust and confidence of victims and communities they are serving.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Still there are a lot of challenges. Relevant proceedings generally take too long from victims' points of view. The Trust Fund's reach is limited. Fragile security situations sometimes become obstacles.

Under both mandates, funding for Trust Fund's programmes depends entirely on voluntary contributions from States Parties, private donors and individuals. As the number of ICC situations and reparations orders increases, the Trust Fund needs more financial and human resources.

Today the total amount of the three reparations orders is more than 13 million Euros and this already far surpasses the reparations reserve of the Fund. The recent annual income level

of 3 to 5 million falls far short of the amount needed to provide even modest remedies to victims, an amount which is roughly estimated at 10 million Euros per year. The present size of the Secretariat staff - less than two dozen in The Hague and the field offices combined - is already too small to effectively address various kinds of work simultaneously.

Reparative justice is an essential element of the Rome Statute. As an owner of the system, it is for you to decide whether to leave this promise as empty words on paper or to create a reality where victims can regain their dignity and hope and rebuild their lives. I would hereby like to request that you further strengthen your support for the Trust Fund for Victims. What is at stake is the future of humanity.

Thank you for your attention.