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SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES

Ceremony for the Solemn Undertaking of the Registrar

Statement by H.E. Ms. Kateřina Sequensová

Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties

On behalf of the President of the Assembly of States Parties, Ms. Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, I am honoured to be here, as Vice-President of the Assembly, to witness the solemn undertaking by Mr. Osvaldo Zavala Giler as Registrar of the International Criminal Court.

I would like to first briefly acknowledge the outgoing Registrar, Mr. Peter Lewis, for his substantial contribution to the Court and the Rome Statute system. The last five years, during extremely difficult circumstances for the world and the Court, has included attacks against the Court and its officials, as well as unprecedented global health crises. All that taking place with the background of ever increasing workload of the Court and changes in its leadership. Mr. Lewis has addressed all risks and opportunities presented to him with extraordinary competence, serenity and humour. He leaves a memorable legacy in the field of international criminal justice, for which we in the Assembly are particularly grateful. We wish you the very best in your new endeavours. I thank you, Mr. Lewis, for your outstanding work. And I thank you, dear Peter, for your friendship.

The Registrar of the International Criminal Court is a key figure in the Rome Statute system. The Registrar is the principal administrative officer of the Court, responsible for the non-judicial aspects of the administration and servicing of the Court. The Registrar supports the work of the judiciary and the Prosecutor, as well as the Assembly, the Trust Fund for Victims, and the other subsidiary bodies.

The Rome Statute entrusted the judges of the Court with the crucial role of electing the Registrar, but the Assembly also plays a role in the process. Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, on 17 June 2022 the President of the Court submitted to the President of the Assembly a shortlist of 12 candidates for Registrar, along with a request for any recommendations. The Assembly adopted a recommendation on the election of the Registrar at its twenty-first session in December 2022. I had the distinct honour to coordinate the elaboration of that recommendation, which contains some novel elements of key importance to the States Parties in their constant quest to strengthen the Rome Statute system. Subsequently, on 10 February 2023, the judges elected Mr. Osvaldo Zavala Giler as the fifth Registrar of the Court, for a period of five years.

Mr. Zavala Giler is well known to many of us, including States Parties, the Court, the host State, and civil society. His interest in the ICC and in international criminal justice was spurred by his paternal grandfather, an eminent Ecuadorian criminal lawyer. We have followed

his impressive career from its beginnings in New York, where he worked very actively for the Coalition for the ICC, to the range of important roles which he has held within the Registry. His work over the years on the Court's budgetary process has brought him into regular contact with the Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, both here and in New York. He thus has in-depth understanding of the key issues for the Court and for States Parties in both The Hague and New York. I speak for all of us when I say that Mr. Zavala Giler has been an excellent colleague and representative of the Court, and that we are confident that his knowledge, experience and interpersonal skills will be extremely valuable in his new role. His election also brings greater regional diversity to the post of Registrar, that was called for by the States Parties.

Mr. Zavala Giler: on behalf of the Assembly, allow me to express my sincere congratulations on your election to the position of Registrar of our Court. New challenges will surely arise, but as you assume your new duties, I would like to assure you of the full support of the Assembly and its States Parties in the steadfast defense of the Rome Statute, the Court, its officials and staff. We shall not relent in furtherance of our common fight against impunity. I wish you all the success in your new role in the Court.

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