



**Registrar of the International Criminal Court - Swearing-in Ceremony
The Hague, 5 April 2023**

**Remarks by the Registrar-elect
Mr Osvaldo Zavala Giler**

Madam Vice President of the Assembly of States Parties,
Mr President of the Court,
Madam Vice President of the Court,
Honourable Judges,
Mr Prosecutor,
Madam Deputy Prosecutor,
Mr Deputy Prosecutor,
Mr Registrar, dear Peter,
Madam President of the ICC Bar Association,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear colleagues, dear friends,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Honourable Judges of the Court for the responsibility they have entrusted in me, and for the privilege to continue to put to the service of this organization my institutional knowledge and the lessons I have learned over the past years, now as its next Registrar.

Allow me this moment to also recognise the presence of and thank a few important people for me here today: my parents, Oswaldo and Jacqueline, and my husband, Daniel. It is often said when expressing gratitude: “I could not have done this without you”. But perhaps there is collective wisdom in such habitual phrases. I know I carry you in who I am.

Your Honours, Excellencies, colleagues,

The work of the Court has always been complex. How can it not be when its mandate is to bring justice for the gravest crimes of concern to the international community. Our institution has continuously faced new challenges, unprecedented from those that came before. Every step we take makes us face new complexities and dynamics, to learn from, and to find in these an opportunity to grow stronger.

We are now facing new challenges of unprecedented difficulty and complexity. We will be shaped by these new challenges, and we will find in them an opportunity to strengthen our legacy and our legitimacy, in the same way in which the various important challenges we have faced in recent years have shaped our experiences and our practices.

I would like here to recognise and thank Peter Lewis, our Registrar, for his steady, calm and able steering of our institution, in times of uncertainty, threats and austerity: dear Peter, this Court owes you a great debt of gratitude for your stewardship, and you will leave an unforgettable legacy as our fourth Registrar. I usually say that we should serve the ICC knowing that none of us individually is bigger than the Court but, Peter, your time here has made this Court bigger.

Honourable Judges,

As Registrar, my calling will be to continue building on the legitimacy of the ICC by ensuring its operational sustainability and strengthening the trust and respect for its mandate. I stand ready and able to take this important step in my long-standing service to the Court by transforming into opportunities our vast institutional experience to meet the challenges ahead.

To achieve this, I am committed to devoting to the Court, and to those it was established to serve, my vision, experience, energy and skills to support the operational effectiveness of its judicial functions and thus contribute to preserving its legacy and safeguarding its future.

Under the authority of the President, I am committed to honouring the confidence the Judges placed in me by further strengthening and streamlining the various duties and services to the judicial proceedings and the administration of the Court that fall under the remit of the Registry, working with all parties and participants, in a fair, neutral and expeditious way. As Registrar, I will dutifully observe my responsibilities to provide the required support to promote the rights of the defence, consistent with the principle of fair trial as defined in the Statute, as well as to enable effective and meaningful participations of victims in the proceedings.

Mr President, Mr Prosecutor,

I am committed to ensure, together with you, that the Court's governance reinforces the principles that sustain judicial and prosecutorial independence, while at the same time ensuring a stable and precise systemic cohesion under the One-Court Principle.

The One-Court Principle is not a mere political aspiration, but rather, it is an essential binding force that allows for institutional cohesion. Without the One-Court

Principle as a grounding exigency of the system, the nature of the mandate of the Court's organs would likely allow them to drift further away from each other, risking institutional fragmentation.

Ensuring this fragile balance by both continuously seeking to strengthen and safeguard the Court's independence, as well as progressively improving the inter-organ processes and mechanisms that enable the Court's united functioning, will remain a key focus of the Court under our joined leadership.

Excellences, distingué.e.s représentantes et représentants des États Parties,

Cette Cour est votre Cour. Nous sommes les gardiens de son mandat et vous, nos États Parties, vous êtes les gardiens de cette organisation et de sa légitimité.

En tant que Greffier, je suis profondément conscient des responsabilités que j'aurai vis-à-vis des États Parties et de l'Assemblée. Je sais que votre soutien ne m'est pas dû; je ne le prends pas pour acquis. Je comprends et j'apprécie votre engagement, que j'ai vu grandir à travers les années. Comme nous le savons, la Cour est financée par des fonds publics; cela ne fait qu'augmenter notre responsabilité de nous assurer que nous mettons en œuvre notre mandat de manière efficiente.

Comme Greffier, je serai aussi guidé par le devoir de préserver la légitimité de la Cour, et je travaillerai en ce sens de manière étroite avec les États Parties et tous nos partenaires, afin de nous assurer que la Cour peut et doit remplir son mandat essentiel.

Permettez-moi alors de venir vers vous; permettez-moi de vous demander votre soutien. La Cour a besoin de votre coopération afin de renforcer et de concrétiser l'entreprise de justice que nous réalisons, ici dans ce bâtiment, et dans nos bureaux de terrain. La Cour a besoin de votre soutien afin de remplir son mandat et concrétiser les investissements que vous avez faits.

Colleagues: the staff, interns, and all personnel at the Court,

We will only deliver effectively if we deliver with and through our staff and those who work at the ICC, by supporting, equipping and enabling them to fulfil their work.

This means that the Court's effectiveness, the sustainability of its operations, and its long-term legitimacy, are directly and primarily reliant on the work of its personnel.

It is the commitment and dedication of those working at the Court that ensures that operations are carried out even in complex and challenging circumstances. As a

result, to safeguard the operational sustainability of the ICC we must guarantee a productive, healthy, diverse, respectful, motivated and committed workforce.

As an organization, the Court owes a duty of care to its staff as a matter of right, but it also substantially benefits from the collective well-being of its workforce.

Building a model of modern public administration that embodies the world's evolving values and ideals, and encourages a safe working environment that promotes professionalism, respect, diversity, equality and inclusion, is not only an aspirational duty based on principle, but rather a fundamental prerequisite for the success of the Court.

Diversity in the workplace, including gender balance, geographical representation and multilingualism, should not be seen as a mere exogenous expectation, it must be a value engraved in our institutional DNA. Our culture is a culture of diversity.

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace must be understood from the perspective of intersectionality. Gender, race, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability are not isolated characteristics but rather coexist.

As the first Latin American to be elected Registrar, as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, as a staff of this Court, as a public servant and a servant of the law, I am proud to serve our Court by your side, and I am humbled and honoured by this opportunity.

Civil society, NGO colleagues,

You are not only the conscience of the institution, but often its loudest voice. I learned to serve the Court with you. My commitment and engagement to justice and the Court was forged among civil society.

Civil society organisations planted the seed of the Court, they guided and safeguarded our growth, and today they show us the path from our actions to our purpose.

Thank you for your support as it helps this Court succeed. Thank you for your criticism, as it makes this Court better. Thank you for your courage, as it makes justice be.

To those the Court was established to serve, to the victims and affected communities of atrocities around the world,

We bear witness of a time when the demands for justice surpass the capacities of the international community to address them. But let us not forget that the notion that

a conflict, that widespread impunity of those wielding power, the notion that a war could be addressed through fair and impartial justice is a relatively new aspiration. And we live today in a time when this aspiration of justice has rightly so become a demand for justice.

It is now our turn to catch up with those demands, to collectively strengthen, not only this Court, but also our national and international institutions, to meet these demands and to set new and higher aspirations. To progress.

We should not take for granted how far we have come. Not only as an institution, in the span of our short history, but also when we see this Court as a reflection of human progress, we see how far we have come.

Do not get me wrong, I understand the setbacks, we understand the limitations. But because we should live in a world in which justice is a fully mainstreamed pillar of peace, security and reconciliation; because we should live in a world where justice is taken for granted, we cannot now take the ICC and the Rome Statute system for granted.

Thank you.