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## **PRESIDENT OF THE ASSEMBLY OF STATES PARTIES**

**Ms. Päivi Kaukoranta**

### **Solemn undertaking of new judges**

The Hague, 8 March 2024

President of the Court,  
Judges of the Court,  
Mr. Prosecutor,  
Mr. Registrar,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a privilege to grace this esteemed gathering today. I, representing the Assembly of States Parties, stand before you to partake in the solemn ceremony of the inauguration of six distinguished judges of the International Criminal Court. These esteemed individuals were duly elected during the 22nd session of the Assembly of States Parties in New York last December. Their election, meticulously conducted in adherence to the principles enshrined within the Rome Statute, ensures a judicious balance by encompassing representation from diverse legal systems across the globe, alongside equitable geographical and gender inclusivity.

The judges elected are:

- Judge Haykel Ben-Mahfoudh (Tunisia)
- Judge Erdenebalsuren Damdin (Mongolia)
- Judge Nicolas Guillou (France)
- Judge Beti Hohler (Slovenia)
- Judge Iulia Antoanella Motoc (Romania)
- Judge Keebong Paek (Republic of Korea)

Ascending to the esteemed position of judge at the Court is an unparalleled honor accompanied by a weighty responsibility. Your designation carries profound expectations by the accused, victims and affected communities and the international community as a whole. You are charged with the solemn duty of administering justice impartially and conscientiously in matters of grave

international consequence. The credibility and integrity of the Court hinge significantly upon your ability to embody fairness and impartiality, coupled with the efficient and effective management of situations and cases. On behalf of the Assembly of States Parties, I extend a heartfelt welcome to you as you undertake this prestigious yet arduous role upon the hallowed bench of the International Criminal Court.

Esteemed judges, the tasks before you are formidable, but you do not tread this path alone. While the Court remains a relatively young institution on the international stage, it has swiftly matured and secured its place within the global order. The Assembly of States Parties stands steadfast beside you in the relentless pursuit of justice and the eradication of impunity. I harbor unwavering confidence that your invaluable contributions, enriched by your diverse perspectives and wealth of experience, will undeniably fortify this institution, and uplift the dedicated individuals laboring within its confines.

As prescribed by the tenets of the Rome Statute, your swearing-in unfolds in a public forum. This ceremonial occasion marks the seamless transition of one-third of the Court's esteemed judges, ensuring the continuum of institutional excellence through the embrace of renewal. As we extend a warm welcome to the six newly elected judges, we also bid a heartfelt farewell to six esteemed judges who end their 9-year terms at the Court :

- Judge Chang-ho Chung (Republic of Korea)
- Judge Piotr Hofmański (Poland)
- Judge Antoine Kesia-Mbe Mindua (Democratic Republic of Congo)
- Judge Péter Kovács (Hungary)
- Judge Marc Perrin de Brichambaut (France)
- Judge Bertram Schmitt (Germany)

While your respective terms in office are now ending, I am aware that a few of you will remain in office until the conclusion of the cases you are currently involved in. Nevertheless, at this occasion, allow me to commend each of you for your invaluable contributions to the institutional development and jurisprudence of this esteemed institution. The Assembly holds in high regard your firm dedication to the advancement of international justice.

I wish to extend special thanks to Judges Piotr Hofmański and Antoine Kesia-Mbe Mindua. Beyond your judicial duties, you have shouldered the responsibilities stemming from your roles as President and Second Vice-President of the Court respectively. Permit me to convey, on behalf of the ASP, our profound appreciation for the considerable efforts you have exerted in these leadership capacities during very challenging times for the Court.



Excellencies,

In conclusion, on behalf of the Assembly of State Parties, I extend my sincerest wishes for a fruitful and fulfilling tenure at the Court to the incoming judges. Rest assured, you can rely on the unwavering support and collaboration of the Assembly of State Parties and the broader Rome Statute system. The Court remains an indispensable pillar of this system, steadfastly upholding the principles of a rule-based international order. To the departing judges, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your service and wish you abundant success in your future endeavours.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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