

**Cour
Pénale
Internationale**



**International
Criminal
Court**

Eighth Diplomatic Briefing of the International Criminal Court

Compilation of Statements

*****Check Against Delivery*****

The Hague, 26 October 2006

Philippe Kirsch, President

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the eighth diplomatic briefing of the International Criminal Court. As we have previously indicated, the purpose of these briefings is to provide States with an update on the Court's activities between sessions of the Assembly of States Parties, and to offer you the opportunity to communicate directly with the Court's senior management.

The information package you received last week provides an update on the activities of the Court and its different organs – the Presidency and Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor, and the Registry – as well as the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties. These documents highlight specific developments since the last diplomatic briefing.

Today, we would like to build upon that information, focusing our presentations on a number of issues likely to be of interest to you in view of the upcoming ASP. I will begin by saying a few words regarding the Court's judicial activity and the proposed 2007 budget, and providing you with an outlook for the future. The Prosecutor will then update you on his prosecutorial strategy. The Registrar will speak in more detail about the 2007 budget and issues relating to the premises of the Court. The Director *ad interim* of the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties will describe preparations for the fifth Assembly of States Parties. We look forward to your questions after our presentations.

I will start with an update on the Court's judicial activities.

In the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the confirmation of charges against Mr. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo has been set for 9 November. As you are no doubt aware, the confirmation hearing was initially postponed to ensure adequate witness protection measures were in place. It was then postponed a second time out of concern for the rights of the accused and the need for the defence to be prepared. While the Court is committed to expeditious proceedings, proceedings must also ensure the full protection of the rights of the defence and meet the Court's obligations to protect victims and witnesses. If the charges are confirmed, the trial will commence next year.

In the meantime, extensive proceedings in the case have been conducted before the Pre-Trial Chamber. One of the significant areas of pre-trial activity is the disclosure of evidence to the defence and, within this context, the need to protect the security of victims and witnesses is paramount. This has required, for example, extensive consideration of exactly what information should be redacted before evidence is disclosed by the prosecutor to the defence.

With respect to the situation in Northern Uganda, as you know, five arrest warrants were issued in July of last year. Pre-trial proceedings are still ongoing. However, the arrest warrants have not yet been executed. The Court does not have the power to carry out arrests. This responsibility belongs to States and international organisations.

With respect to the situation in Darfur, Sudan, the Pre-Trial Chamber has been dealing with issues such as the protection of victims and the preservation of evidence.

The Appeals Chamber has issued judgments relating to its powers to review a decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber denying leave to appeal and concerning restrictions on disclosure prior to the confirmation hearing. The Chamber has also rendered other procedural decisions.

The judges of the Court have had to interpret and apply complex legal provisions of the Rome Statute and Rules of Procedure and Evidence. They are addressing fundamental issues which will determine how future proceedings will be handled. Some of these issues may also require a decision of the Appeals Chamber. As the Court's jurisprudence is established, proceedings can be expected to increase in efficiency.

The Court is committed to the publicity of proceedings. We also have statutory obligations to ensure the safety of victims and witnesses. As a result, not all judicial activity is publicly available.

I would like to now turn to the Court's proposed budget for 2007.

The budget is based on the Court's strategic plan adopted earlier this year. Strategic objectives were used to derive the objectives for the budget, not only for each organ, but down to the level of individual units. This has contributed to improved coherence and coordination of the budget. More importantly, it should also ensure that our requested budgetary resources are appropriate and necessary to meeting our strategic goals and objectives.

In terms of the substance of the budget, I would like to make a few general remarks.

The Court has limited budgetary requests to only those funds which are clearly needed in 2007. Thus, the budget includes funds only for the trial that is foreseen for next Spring. Should other persons be arrested and surrendered, the Court would rely on the contingency fund in 2007 for the expenses of additional trials.

The proposed budget for 2007 is € 93 million. Over € 9 million of the increase from last year is due to existing or standard obligations, such as inflation or the pensions of judges. Actual increases amount to 3.9 million and are due almost exclusively to operational needs. These include: outreach; opening a potential fourth situation; support to investigations; and building international support for arrest warrants.

As you may be aware, the Committee on Budget and Finance met in The Hague two weeks ago. We do not yet have the final report and, therefore, have only a preliminary reaction at this stage. There are indications that we will have to return to some of the recommendations of the CBF at the time of the ASP, notably in the area of outreach. The Registrar will tell you more about other recommendations of the CBF.

In advance of the ASP, I would also like to update you on the current status of the Headquarters Agreement. Negotiations on the Headquarters Agreement began in early 2003. In the meantime, we have provisionally applied the Headquarters Agreement of ICTY. The Court and host country have kept the ASP informed of progress. The Court's position is based on the "basic principles" adopted by the ASP in 2002. The negotiations have been complex. Last week, I received a letter

from the Dutch Foreign Minister clarifying the last outstanding issues. On this basis, we will see how to bring the matter to a conclusion.

I would now like to conclude with some more general remarks.

For the first three years of its existence, the burden of developing the Court rested in large part on its own shoulders. The Court recognises its continuing responsibility to demonstrate its credibility in practice, through the fairness and efficiency of its proceedings. We are also fully committed to ensuring and maintaining an efficient and sound administration.

However, the Court has now reached a stage in its operations where it has become increasingly clear that its success will depend equally on the cooperation it receives from States Parties, and by extension, international and regional organisations. The Court was designed by States to depend on two equally important pillars. The Court is the judicial pillar. The other pillar – the enforcement arm – was given to States. In national systems, the judicial and enforcement mechanisms are closely linked. In Rome, States decided that the Court should not have an enforcement mechanism of its own. Rather it depends on the cooperation of States. Having designed this system, it is up to States to assume the responsibility for enforcement.

Of course cooperation is needed by other actors as well. International and regional organisations provide vital assistance. This includes many of the same forms of cooperation provided by States. The United Nations in particular continues to provide cooperation in the field in terms of logistical support. As the Court's activities increase, support from the UN will also increase in importance. I am pleased to inform you, therefore, that we have now established the liaison office in New York and appointed Ms. Socorro Flores Lierra as Head of the Office. In the annual report of the activities of the Court to the ASP, we have reported to States Parties on the establishment of the liaison office.

Earlier this month I emphasized the importance of cooperation during my presentation of the annual report of the Court to the United Nations General Assembly. During the ensuing discussion, I was heartened to hear the widespread support for cooperation to the Court. There are a number of areas in which the form of cooperation required for the Court to function is expressly clear. To take only two examples, I could mention first, adoption of implementing legislation. Second, there is ratification of the Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the ICC, to ensure that the Court staff may exercise necessary functions on the territory of a State and to enable Court officials, victims and witnesses to travel across borders to participate in judicial proceedings. We have taken note of requests for more specific indications of cooperation in other areas required by the Court and will be pleased to come back to States on this point.

In this regard, the Court looks forward to the general debate at the upcoming ASP and hopes to hear the views of States how to secure the level and form of cooperation needed to carry out its mandate and activities, including the role of States, the Assembly of States Parties and, where appropriate, other State actors such as intergovernmental organisations.

I will now give the floor to the Prosecutor who will give you an overview of his prosecutorial strategy.

Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Prosecutor

Introduction

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour to address you here today.

As you will recall, at the last diplomatic briefing on 29 June 2006 I spoke about the Prosecutorial Strategy. Specifically I described the Office's five strategic objectives for the next three years :

- (1) To complete two expeditious trials improving the quality of the prosecution;
- (2) to conduct four to six new investigations of those who bear the greatest responsibility ;
- (3) to gain the necessary forms of cooperation ;
- (4) to continuously improve the way in which we interact with victims
- (5) to maximize the office's contribution to the fight against impunity and the prevention of crimes.

Today I would like to explain in a bit more detail our present activities regarding the different situations my office is working on and the assumptions for the coming year.

Our current activities

In the Darfur investigation, our efforts are complicated by the security situation within Sudan and, also, within neighbouring countries such as Chad. The OTP has regularly consulted with the relevant agencies of the UN and with the AU and continues to make an assessment of the security situation. We have concluded since June 2005 that it was not possible to adequately protect witnesses in Darfur. No effective system of witness protection can be established. Thus investigative effort are continuing outside Darfur in more secure locations; this has not prevented the investigation from proceeding for a period of fourteen months. During that time the OTP has taken statements from witnesses and victims, including refugees from Darfur. We have conducted investigative steps in fifteen countries. The full collection of evidence gathered since June 2005 includes approximately nine thousand seven hundred fifty items of evidence or information; this includes those documents provided by the UN International Commission of Inquiry.

The OTP also has requested cooperation from the Government of Sudan. Four missions have taken place in Khartoum. Investigative staff from OTP have conducted formal interviews of two senior officials of the Government of Sudan about the conflict in Darfur. Among the material which has been supplied by the Government of Sudan is information on their own efforts to investigate and prosecute crimes which potentially fall within the jurisdiction of the Court. The OTP continues to monitor this activity by the Government of Sudan in accordance with its obligations under the Statute. In the coming phase the OTP will seek to complete the investigation of the first case and will continue to assess on an ongoing basis the admissibility of cases. The Office aims to deliver justice to the victims of the crimes in Darfur, either through respecting genuine efforts at a national level or through cases before ICC judges or a combination of both.

Concerning Uganda, I would like to update you on issues relating to the arrest warrants and our contacts with relevant authorities of the DRC, Sudan and Uganda. As you know, we regularly communicate with the Ugandan authorities. Since October 2005, the OTP has also conducted four

missions to the Sudan during which meetings were conducted about the execution of the warrants of arrest. Since the LRA entered the DRC, the OTP has also conducted missions to the DRC to exchange information. In April 2006, I met with President Joseph Kabila and other government and UN officials about the LRA and the execution of warrants naming LRA commanders located inside the DRC territory. The OTP also has conducted missions, in Europe, Africa, and to New York, to meet with representatives of other concerned States-parties and the relevant departments of the UN, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as a means of supporting international cooperation in aid of arrest efforts.

On 26 August 2006, the Government of Uganda and the LRA signed a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement which conditioned a temporary cease-fire. The role of the existence of the warrants in creating pressure upon the LRA to bring them to the table has publicly been acknowledged.

The States to which the warrants of arrest were transmitted continue to re-state their commitment to executing the warrants of arrest, during the pendency of the ongoing negotiations. Uganda's position that it has engaged in the current peace talks as a means of seeking a permanent solution to the violence that serves the need for peace and justice, compatible with its obligations under the Rome Statute is expressed in the letter of the Government of Uganda to the Registry dated October 2006. The Government of Sudan has signed an *ad hoc* agreement with the OTP in which it agreed to cooperate in arrest efforts. Through its meetings with DRC representatives, the OTP is aware that the Government of the DRC also understands its cooperation obligations and has in acknowledgment of those obligations requested MONUC to support arrest efforts consistent with MONUC's mandate.

The peace negotiations have given rise to media accounts in which commentators or representatives of States are reported to have raised the possibility of "withdrawing" the warrants of arrest or granting an amnesty to the persons named in the warrants. No State or any other entity, however, has sought withdrawal of the warrants, nor has any State or any other entity requested any amnesty from this Court. The Government of Uganda, as a party to the talks, has also consistently indicated in its communications to the Registry and the OTP that "the talks remain at an early stage and it is speculative to determine the outcome at this moment."

Our mandate is judicial. Neither the OTP nor the ICC are parties to the talks. The main point for us is that the latest letter from the Government of Uganda to the Registry reiterates that the commitment of the Government to cooperate with, and support the Court remains unchanged. Ambassador Blaak also acknowledged the ongoing nature of Uganda's cooperation, in openly seeking recognition from the other States-parties attending the Second Public Hearing of the Prosecutor that "executing the ICC arrest warrants is a collective responsibility requiring intensified international cooperation."

On DRC, the case against Thomas Lubanga is the first. We are of course continuing to collect evidence in relation to other groups/crimes investigated in Ituri with the aim of a second case in the coming year. However, security conditions and the current volatility of the situation in the DRC are strong constraints on our investigative work at the moment. We are also planning to open an investigation in a third case in the DRC.

Our activities extend beyond those 3 investigations. As you know, we continue to receive hundreds of communications from individual and groups on alleged violations of the Rome Statute and we assess this information; we conduct or have conducted preliminary analysis in situations concerning countries from all continents. We are assessing the gravity and admissibility of the situations that could fall under our jurisdiction.

The Office of the Prosecutor's Assumptions for 2007

As made evident in the Prosecutorial Strategy, my Office's assumption is that we will conduct one full trial, the trial against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, in 2007. Additionally, we will continue with a second investigation in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and we expect to request an arrest warrant in 2007. We also expect to begin a third investigation in the situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With regard to the situation in Northern Uganda, we have made our plans based on the assumption that the arrest warrants against the four remaining LRA commanders will be executed.

In our third situation, that of Darfur, the Sudan, we will continue our investigation and expect pre-trial activity to occur in 2007.

Finally, we expect to select a possible fourth situation before the end of 2006 and to carry out our investigation and pre-trial activity during 2007.

We have employed these assumptions as the basis for our budget proposal for 2007.

The Success of the Rome System is a Joint Responsibility

The President has highlighted in his presentation the important role that cooperation from States Parties and other stakeholders plays in achieving the Court's mandate. As the President just mentioned, it is essential that states and other relevant actors work with the Court if we are to achieve its mandate. The level of cooperation impact heavily on the efficiency and speed of the investigations led by the OTP.

Interestingly enough, the issue of cooperation with states and international organisations was also one of the main issues mentioned by the States themselves and the NGOs during the Second Public Hearings that my Office engaged in with interested states and civil society here in the Hague and in New York in September and October. I would just like to briefly mention some of the requirements that were addressed during those exchanges.

First of all, there is a requirement for general political support. We need that political support to extend to all the departments within your countries. We need this support to be expressed in multilateral meetings, in the General assembly and in the Security Council.

To promote such efforts on your part, we recognize that there is a need to exchange information about the situation in the areas concerned between the OTP and States Parties. Some states have created an informal dialogue mechanism with the OTP involving country desk experts and embassies abroad. Let me confirm again our availability for such contacts.

Of course, there is also a need for more practical assistance. It was noted during The Hague meeting that the OTP should be more explicit about the types of cooperation needed by providing detailed, extensive and concrete requests for support. The understanding of the importance of cooperation and the need to provide more details about different forms of cooperation is shared by the whole Court and we will come back to States on this point.

Cooperation by states will be key in the areas of arrest and surrender. Another major field of cooperation is the protection of witnesses. Offering protection to witnesses at all stages of the proceedings is a statutory obligation for my Office, it is also a requirement for the integrity of our investigations and the relationship of trust we establish with our witnesses. Whenever there is a threat, and this can arise very early in the investigative process, months before an actual trial, we need to move quickly and efficiently; threatened witnesses cannot wait. The cost for the Registry which has the responsibility for such activities is immense; this is why the Court needs avenues such as agreements for relocation of witnesses.

Other concrete forms of assistance include of course the sharing of information and intelligence; I should also mention the provision of expertise in some specific fields such as forensics; then the provision of an airplane in a timely manner, as in the case of Thomas Lubanga, can prove of utmost importance.

It was also noted in The Hague meeting that the Court needs to consolidate and expand its relationship not only with States but with the UN and its various bodies and agencies. As indicated in the Prosecutorial strategy, it is one of our objectives. Our dialogue with the UN secretariat, the legal advisor of the UN or DPKO is intense. Ad hoc arrangements with specific agencies and programmes are pursued.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the recent exchanges I had with yourselves in The Hague during the Public hearing, as well as my recent trip to New York have given me a lot of insight in what could or should be done in this area of cooperation. Hours spent in exchanging ideas, in receiving criticisms sometimes, was not wasted. This Court has a lot of different constituencies: states, NGOs, victims. The importance of receiving support from all these stakeholders is key for achieving the Court's mandate. We need this supportive environment and only through our combined efforts of outreach will we succeed. It is therefore essential that a programme as important as outreach should be sufficiently funded to enable the Court to fulfil its mandate.

Conclusion

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for this opportunity to discuss aspects of the prosecutorial strategy with you today.

Bruno Cathala, Registrar

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to also extend to you a warm welcome to today's Diplomatic Briefing, which represents an excellent forum enabling regular exchange and dialogue between the Court and States Parties.

You have had the opportunity to learn from the remarks of the President and the Prosecutor about the progress made on several of the Court's strategic projects in preparation for the forthcoming session of the Assembly of States Parties. Today, in my brief remarks, I'll touch upon the 2007 draft programme budget and the Court's premises.

1. 2007 Draft Programme Budget

During the last diplomatic briefing, I provided you with an overview of the main features of the 2007 draft programme budget. Today, I would like to discuss its methodology and presentation, its underlying assumptions, and the estimates of the financial resources required by the Court to efficiently and effectively carry out its anticipated judicial activities for 2007.

a) Methodology and Presentation

With regard to the methodology and presentation of the 2007 budget submission, the Court has drawn upon the advice and recommendations of the Committee on Budget and Finance (CBF) and the Assembly of States Parties, with a view to providing a coherent and realistic draft budget in a transparent manner.

I would like to mention that last year's draft programme budget was, for the first time, centred on the idea of having general objectives for the Court even though there was no ICC Strategic Plan to speak of. The 2007 budget submission has continued on the same logic, but has advanced the process much further by incorporating the Court's strategic objectives as indicated in the Strategic Plan. Each major programme has identified the strategic goals, and each sub-programme the strategic objectives to which it will contribute, and performance indicators have also been set. Integrating the Strategic Plan into future draft programme budgets is a forward-looking exercise, seldom resorted to by other international organisations. It reflects the Court's commitment to ensuring a tangible link between its vision, its strategic goals and objectives, and its day-to-day operations.

b) Underlying Assumptions

As I indicated during our last meeting, the assumptions underlying the Court's 2007 budget submission are the result of lessons learnt from implementing the budget in previous years. We learnt from the fact that we did not spend the entire budget in those years. We wanted to base the budget on assumptions that are generally well founded.

Consequently, the Court has not budgeted for an additional trial in 2007, for example, since there have been no arrests other than Mr Lubanga's to date. It intends to finance unexpected

expenditures, such as an additional trial, from the contingency fund. Nevertheless, a certain margin of uncertainty remains, since the Court has not yet completed a full judicial cycle, and factors such as the time required for the arrest and surrender of suspects to the Court can be difficult to forecast, as they are primarily dependent on cooperation from States and other actors.

In this respect, as the President and Prosecutor have underscored, the Court has now entered a phase in its operations where the success of its work is increasingly dependent on the level of cooperation it receives from a variety of actors. Apart from the logistical support required in relation to its field operations, in order to conduct trials, the Court needs the support of States in arresting and surrendering suspects, in ensuring the safety and protection of victims, witnesses and staff operating in high-risk areas, and in enforcing its sentences in the future.

I would now like to turn to the resources required to implement the 2007 budget submission.

c) Resources Required and their Distribution

As you all know, the resources required by the Court to carry out its judicial activities as forecasted in 2007 amount to €93.5 million, representing an increase of 16.2% over the previous year. A large part of the budget growth (€9.2 million) is the result of what I would call “induced costs”, that is, costs incurred, but not initiated by the Court. For example, the budget item ‘inflation’ is merely the application of UN salary scales to the Court staff as applied by the ASP since September 2002, whereas the €3.9 million representing the net increase are costs associated with the development and maintenance of witness protection programmes, the implementation of the Court’s comprehensive outreach strategy, and enhancement of international cooperation.

All these growth areas have been discussed with the CBF through a dialogue which the Court, like the CBF, would like to see strengthened, since the issues dealt with in these meetings are often quite delicate and call for in-depth discussion.

In fact, time needs to be devoted to the consideration of a topic such as the Court’s outreach programme. It was actually the Assembly of States Parties which at its last session requested that the Court draw up a Strategic Plan for Outreach “to engage the communities in situations under investigation in a process of constructive interaction with the Court designed to promote understanding and support for its mandate, to manage expectations and to enable those communities to follow and understand the international criminal justice process ...”. This request echoed the Court’s commitment to render justice both publicly and transparently in the eyes of the affected populations and especially those who suffered from the crimes committed in the regions where the Court is active. In our previous meetings, I updated you on the Court’s outreach activities in the countries whose situation has been referred to the Court, and emphasised that the outreach initiatives undertaken so far had not been sufficient.

In the Court’s view, the implementation of this strategic document requires that additional resources be allocated in the 2007 draft programme budget. These resources mirror the Court’s commitment to further underpin its outreach activities, with a view to enabling communities affected by crimes under the Court’s jurisdiction to understand and follow the Court through its various judicial phases and activities. We believe that they are a realistic and reasonable estimate of the means needed to carry out the wish of the Assembly as indicated at its last session.

In the same vein, I would like to remind you of the fact that the Court's field missions, especially investigative and outreach missions amongst affected communities, depend to a great extent on the security situation prevailing in the regions where the Court carries out its activities. In fact, despite meticulous advance preparation and organisation, missions are often postponed or sometimes even cancelled as a result of the extremely volatile security situation. These repeated delays and cancellations not only directly affect the Court's budget, but also inevitably cause delays in the judicial process.

I would now like to touch briefly on some issues related to the Court's interim and permanent premises.

2. Premises

a) Interim Premises

The Court has continued its regular exchange with the Host State on the issue of interim premises for the Court's staff. The Host State informed us that it was no longer considering accommodating part of the Court in prefabricated buildings, but instead in a building in the immediate vicinity of the current premises. However, this new space will seemingly not be available before mid-2008. The Court has indicated to the Host State that, in that event, it would like to minimise the dispersal of the Court and that it would very much like to obtain two additional floors in the "Hoftoren" in 2007.

I would also like to thank the Host State for its offer to provide the Court with security staff to cover our requirements in these new premises.

b) Permanent Premises

A group of experts met in The Hague from 21 to 22 September 2006 to consider the issue of permanent premises. During the discussions, it became clear that the Court should focus on developing a functional brief containing the core requirements for its future permanent premises.

Furthermore, discussions with members of the CBF have also demonstrated the necessity of developing the functional brief as soon as possible.

The Court has taken steps in this regard and has embarked on preparatory work with a view to providing you with as much information as possible.

Thank you.

M. Renan Villacis, Director *ad interim* of the Secretariat of the Assembly of States Parties

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentleman,

It is a pleasure to be with you in order to convey some of the most important developments regarding States and the Court since our prior diplomatic briefing. I will limit myself to some highlights since most of the information is reproduced in the information package you have received.

We welcome the recent ratifications to the Rome Statute by Comoros and Saint Kitts and Nevis. On 1 November, when the Statute enters into force for these two States, there would be a total of 102 States Parties. As regards the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Court, Albania, Bulgaria, the Central African Republic and the Republic of Korea recently became parties, thus bringing the total number of Parties to 42.

The fifth session of the Assembly shall take place from 23 November to 1 December here in The Hague. A resumed fifth session is scheduled to take place from 29 to 31 January 2007 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The resumed fifth session will be devoted to the Special Working Group on the Crime of Aggression.

Documentation for the fifth session, including the provisional agenda and the proposed programme budget for 2007, is available on the Internet website of the Court.

Further to the invitation sent to all States in February, a note on credentials and registration was sent to all States in early October 2006 (ICC-ASP/5/SP/25, ICC-ASP/5/OS/26 and ICC-ASP/5/IS/27). Copies of these communications, which refer to both the fifth session and the resumed fifth session, as well as a useful Handbook for participants, are available on the Court's website.

The provisional programme of work of the fifth session is still under consideration by the Bureau. Nonetheless, at its 31 August meeting, the Bureau decided to include an item entitled 'General debate' in the provisional agenda of the fifth session.

At its 23 October meeting the Bureau decided that this general debate shall take place during the first two days of the session, namely on Thursday, 23 and Friday, 24 November. States shall be invited to deliver statements of no more than five minutes on any topic they wish to address. States may inscribe themselves on the list of speakers for the general debate by contacting the Secretariat as of 1 November. A communication with this information shall be sent to States shortly.

In addition, a note has been sent to all States, regarding the possibility to resort to the trust fund established to facilitate the participation of the least developed countries and other developing States in the activities of the Assembly (ICC-ASP/5/S/29). The note also requests States who may be able to make contributions to the trust fund to contact the Secretariat of the Assembly.

As regards the New York Working Group of the Bureau, on 23 October the Bureau adopted its report on the Ratification and Implementation of the Rome Statute, which includes a Plan of Action for the Assembly, as well as the report on the arrears of States Parties.

As regards The Hague Working Group of the Bureau, Ambassador Sandra Fuentes (Mexico) was recently designated as the new Coordinator. This Working Group has submitted an interim report on the issue of permanent premises to the Bureau. Mr. Masud Husain (Canada) has been appointed as the Facilitator on the issue and he is endeavouring to prepare a draft resolution on permanent premises.

The Hague Working Group has also submitted its report on the Strategic Plan of the Court to the Bureau. An update to that report, along with the text of a draft resolution, shall be finalized in the coming days by the Facilitator, Ms. Michèle Dubrocard (France).

Ambassador Kalimi Mugambi Mworira (Kenya) was designated as the Facilitator for the issue of proposals to improve equitable geographical representation and gender balance in the recruitment of staff members.

Some of these issues shall be further developed at the twelfth meeting of the Working Group, which is scheduled to take place this afternoon, immediately following this diplomatic briefing, in this Briefing Room.

As regards the Committee on Budget and Finance, the Bureau designated Mr. Juhani Lemmik (Estonia) and Ms. Rosette Nyirinkindi Katungye (Uganda) as the new members to fill two vacancies which had arisen in the Committee.

This Committee held its seventh session from 9 to 13 October in The Hague. The respective report should be available around 1 November; it will be e-mailed to States and posted on the Internet as soon as it is issued.

As regards the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims, the second election of the members is scheduled to take place during the fifth session of the Assembly. The Bureau fixed a 12 week nomination period, which started on 5 June 2006. As the minimum requirements for the nomination of members of the Board was not met at the end of that 12 week period, the President of the Assembly has extended the nomination period three times. The third extension ends on 29 October 2006.

The Board will be meeting at the Court on 6 and 7 November for its annual session. In this connection, we note that only four members will attend, in light of the recent resignation of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah (Jordan).

Finally, we wish to draw to your attention to the tentative dates for the sixth session of the Assembly, scheduled to be held in New York, from 30 November to 14 December 2007.

Thank you.