

# AUSTRIA



PERMANENT MISSION OF AUSTRIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**Side Event: 20th anniversary of the Rome Statute:**

**The need for universality and the International Criminal Court's  
jurisdiction over the crime of aggression**

**Statement by Austria**

**delivered by**

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***Check against delivery***

Anniversaries are an occasion to celebrate, to reflect on past achievements and to identify the challenges for the future.

The activation decision, by consensus, on the crime of aggression by the ASP in December 2017 and the exercise of its jurisdiction as of today are undoubtedly a big milestone in the Court's most recent history. We are very proud that States Parties agreed to activate at the earliest occasion and it has been an honor for Austria to have contributed to this historic step as facilitator. This decision completes the legacy of the Nuremberg trials and we believe that it has the potential to play an important part in the maintenance of international peace and security as a deterrent of war in the future.

While celebrating the ICC and its achievements we should and must not forget the work that still lies ahead of us: The values enshrined in the preamble of the Rome Statute are universal in nature. We therefore must continue to strive for the universality of the Statute in order to ensure that the fight against impunity becomes truly global. Furthermore, we invite all States Parties to accept all the amendments to the Statute. The court deserves and needs the unwavering support of all States Parties and the global community as a whole.

20 years ago, the Rome Statute established the first permanent, treaty-based court so that the most serious crimes of international concern do not go unpunished. Given Austria's longstanding commitment to strengthening the rule of law and promoting international criminal justice, today we can say that the ICC fulfilled our expectations: As Jim Stewart said "What was a noble idea 20 years ago is a reality today". The ICC has a unique and invaluable role in the fight against impunity and in recognizing and delivering justice to victims. It is instrumental for achieving accountability and reconciliation. This court is exactly what the global community needed 20 years ago and it is needed more than ever today. Together we as States Parties shall continue working on a strong and efficient Court which can serve justice where there still is none.

Thank you.