

Statement of the Convenor of the Coalition for the ICC, Mr. William Pace at:

**General Debate of the 16th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to
the International Criminal Court**

Friday, 8 December
United Nations Headquarters

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Mr. Vice-President, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues,

We congratulate President Kaba and the Vice Presidents for your important and excellent leadership and welcome O-Gon Kwon as the President-elect.

For this 16th Session of the Assembly of State Parties (ASP) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, I am again honored to make a statement on behalf of the ***Coalition for the International Criminal Court (Coalition)***—a global network of more than 2,500 non-governmental and civil society organizations in 150 countries, working in partnership for enforcement of the Rome Statute, of international humanitarian law, and for a fair, effective, and independent International Criminal Court (ICC).

Colleagues, delegates, Mr Vice President. The Coalition is assisting in the facilitation of 400-500 NGO representatives accredited to ASP16. The Coalition's "key recommendations", its paper summarizing the issues before the Assembly and its paper summarizing the status of the activities and cases of the Court are available electronically and in print. These represent a small fraction of the papers, reports, research and special event seminars provided by civil society, non-governmental organizations and experts to the Assembly and Court.

We appreciate the strong support and commitment for the Rome Statute and ICC expressed by many ASP delegates and governments during the General Debate.

In the time of increasing threats to progressive multilateralism, we believe that the ASP of the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court remains one of the most important government assemblies in the international legal order. I mean this literally, with the catastrophic failure of the UN Security Council. With this paralysis getting worse, the international community needs to find other organs and processes – and

this Assembly is one of the few alternatives capable of complementing the malfunctions of the Security Council. Instead, too many governments and others are allowing the ICC to be blamed for the failures of the Security Council.

This Assembly, representing nearly two-thirds of the international community – of the international legal order – could be a major force countering the collapse and retreat of progressive multilateralism: of exits, withdrawals, extreme repressive nationalism, the erection of walls of discrimination, and violent conflicts resulting in ICC crimes.

Thus, we want this Assembly to be the force of progress that your governments **were** in negotiating the Rome Statute and achieving 123 ratifications and setting up the Court. We want you to be proactive instead of reactive.

We are very concerned about some of the most powerful governments of the Assembly importing the worse politics of paralysis into the ICC Assembly – even calling themselves a “G7”- these politics of financial intimidation and coercion will backfire on them, on the Assembly, the Court and the Rome Statute system.

Publicly calling for more investigations by the ICC in the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and in the media, and then engaging in the politics of repressing investigations and jurisdictions of the ICC in the Assembly, are contradictory or worse– and these are by many of the same self-named G7 governments.

Mr. Vice President - We hope the 20th anniversary will be a time for the renewal of understanding and commitment to making the Rome Statute, the ICC and the unprecedented system of international criminal justice created by the Rome Statute the hope for peace and the rule of law for this century that we all affirmed so few years ago and which is needed more than ever in our current world.

Thank you.