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WORKING MEETING ON THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT  
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Friday, April 12, 2013 – 2:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Simon Bolívar Room

OAS Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

REMARKS BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES



Remarks by the Delegation of the United States  
at the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs' Working Meeting  
on the International Criminal Court

Friday, April 12, 2013  
Washington, D.C.

AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

Thank you, Mr. Chair, fellow delegates, and distinguished panelists.

Mr. Chair, the United States has consistently championed the cause of pursuing accountability for the world's worst crimes and preventing these crimes in the future. As we have noted in the past, as many of the ad hoc tribunals and courts draw to a close, the ICC can become an even more important safeguard against impunity.

Although the United States is not a party to the Rome Statute, we are continuing to engage with the ICC and States Parties to the Rome Statute to end impunity for the worst crimes.

As many of you may know, the United States has sent observer delegations to each of the last four ICC Assembly of States Parties meetings. We participated actively in the 2010 Review Conference in Kampala, Uganda.

And we are particularly pleased to have joined consensus on each of the last two UN General Assembly Resolutions on the ICC, and of course, on last year's OAS General Assembly resolution.

Today the U.S. delegation would like to highlight just a few examples of the ways in which the United States has engaged with the Court on a case-by-case basis as consistent with our laws and policy. We have publicly urged cooperation and have been supporting the work of the ICC in each of its current cases.

Most recently, of course, was Bosco Ntaganda's surrender to the ICC after he appeared at the United States embassy in Rwanda. After eluding justice for nearly seven years, his surrender marked an important day for international justice and the people of the eastern regions of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ntaganda's prosecution before the International Criminal Court in The Hague will contribute to the goal of peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes, and will just as importantly send a strong message to all perpetrators of atrocities that they will be held accountable for their crimes. We were particularly grateful to the Rwandan, Dutch, and British governments for their cooperation in facilitating Bosco's departure from Rwanda and his surrender to the ICC in The Hague.

In general, of course, we continue to make clear that it is essential that the fugitives who currently remain at large in the ICC's cases are apprehended. We speak out about the need to bring them to justice in our diplomatic outreach and we work to cultivate international support and consensus in multilateral and regional fora.

In this connection, another recent development is the expansion of our War Crimes Rewards Program. In January, President Obama signed into law a powerful new tool that can be used to help bring to justice perpetrators of the worst crimes known to human kind. Under the expanded program, we will offer monetary rewards—of up to \$5 million—for information that leads to the arrest or conviction of specific foreign nationals accused by international criminal tribunals of atrocity-related crimes, including the ICC as well as mixed or hybrid tribunals.

Just last week, the United States announced the Secretary of State's first reward offers under this enhanced authority, which included Joseph Kony and two other senior leaders of the so-called Lord's Resistance Army; and Sylvestre Mudacumura, who is subject to an ICC arrest warrant for war crimes allegedly committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The ICC Prosecutor, Ms. Fatou Bensouda, attended our public announcement and expressed her strong and sincere appreciation for the expansion of the program and the offer of rewards for information about these individuals. I should note that Secretary of State Kerry was a sponsor of this legislation while still serving in the United States Senate, and authored a powerful op-ed in published by *The Huffington Post* about the program and these designations, which I commend to you for consideration.

In closing, my delegation would like to mention another crucial aspect of cooperation within the system of international criminal justice, and that is with respect to the principle of complementarity and building the capacity of states to ensure justice for victims of atrocities. The principle of complementarity is at the core of the ICC Statute; and beyond furthering accountability, a strong national justice system is essential to the achievement of peace, stability, the consolidation of democracy, and economic development.

As the U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Criminal Justice noted in The Hague at last year's ICC Assembly of States Parties: "we must act together in a concerted and coordinated fashion, pool our resources, and share our best practices, ideas, and expertise. All nations have something valuable to bring to this conversation. Although this initiative should be a priority for the Assembly of States Parties, it must also continue to be taken up by other multilateral fora, the development community, civil society, regional organizations, and others in the service of justice."

I thank you for your kind attention and my delegation looks forward to continuing this conversation.

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