STATEMENT

BY

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UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

ON

THE REPORT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT (ICC)

AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HALL,
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK

MONDAY, 30 OCTOBER, 2016

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
Mr. President,

My delegation is grateful to the President of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Judge Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, for the report tabled before us for consideration today. We congratulate the Court for relocating to its permanent premises in The Hague, the Netherlands, which was marked with an official opening ceremony on 19th April 2016.

2. The objective of the ICC is based on the concept that impunity must be challenged and that everybody should be held accountable for their actions. Therefore, we welcome the appreciable progress recorded by the Court in the fight against impunity and crimes against humanity. We commend the Court for its significant contributions to the development of substantive and procedural International Criminal Law. We also recognize the important contributions of the Court to the promotion of the rule of law. Through its works, the need to ensure accountability for genocide, crimes against humanity as well as war crimes, have been strengthened.

Mr. President,

3. We have studied the report before us closely and we observed that during the period, the Court had an unprecedented workload, with four cases simultaneously at trial and several at other stages of proceedings. We noted that the Court is currently seized of 23 cases and 10 situations. Some of these cases and situations include its first case involving command responsibility, the first conviction for sexual violence, the Court’s first war crime charge regarding the destruction of historic monuments and buildings dedicated to religion, the commencement of reparations proceedings as well as the convictions and the sentences that were appealed against.
4. It is also notable that the Office received information from various sources alleging the commission of crimes potentially falling within the Court's jurisdiction. These include the Court's registration of 410 communications relating to article 15 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, of which 302 were manifestly outside the Court's jurisdiction, 35 were unrelated to current situations and warranted further analysis, 62 were linked to a situation already under analysis and 11 were linked to an investigation or prosecution. These large number of referrals entrusted to the Court indicates the increasing acknowledgement of its relevance as an apt instrument to fight impunity.

Mr. President,

5. We welcome improved cooperation between the ICC and the principal organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly and the Security Council, including the UN Peacekeeping missions and other United Nations presence in the field. As the main forum for international cooperation and consultation, the UN presents a unique platform for promoting the mainstreaming and understanding of Rome Statute issues and considerations into wider areas of international activity. We also note with satisfaction the content of the report concerning cooperation with and assistance from States, other international organisations and civil society; as well as the cooperation between relevant partners in the context of supporting and strengthening the Rome Statute system of international criminal justice.

6. We welcome the exchange of information between the Libyan Prosecutor-General's office and the Office of the Prosecutor. We commend the Libyan Prosecutor-General and the Libyan Representative to the ICC for their close cooperation with the Office of the Prosecutor. We encourage the two sides to
strengthen their cooperation and work together to end impunity in Libya.

Mr. President,

7. The report indicates that the Office of the Prosecutor continued its analysis of war crimes allegedly committed by Boko Haram and by the Nigerian security forces in the context of the continuing armed conflict in Nigeria. In response to the Prosecutor’s request for information on actions undertaken by the Government on this, the report adds that the Attorney General and Minister of Justice assured of Nigeria’s commitment to support and cooperate with the Office.

8. Against this backdrop, as a committed member of the Assembly of States Party to the Rome Statute of the ICC and a current member of its Bureau, my delegation wishes to reiterate Nigeria’s continuous commitment to support and cooperate with the Court. Nigeria believes that impunity must be addressed resolutely wherever it occurred in the world. For this reason, we are faithfully committed to the fundamental values of the Rome Statute and to the ideals of the ICC. As we reaffirm our continued membership of the Assembly, Nigeria is prepared to also continue to work in concert with Member States to address the concerns that have been raised against the Court.

Mr. President,

9. It is our belief that the aspiration for a global system that is based on the rule of law, where accountability and social justice are the foundations for durable peace, should be a priority goal for the international community, for world leaders and for the citizens alike.

10. I thank you.