Madam President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,
Thank you for the opportunity to address this Assembly on three areas [we believe] of vital importance to the ICC’s efficiency and effectiveness: Outreach; Field Presence; and the situation Completion Strategy.

First, on Outreach. Madam President, we urge this Assembly to continue its consistent support [in the Omnibus Resolution and in the Budget], for Early and Sustained Outreach, as being necessary for every aspect of the Court’s work, and essential to its relevance and impact.

At the request of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, together with local partners, No Peace Without Justice has recently concluded a major survey on the impact and legacy of the Special Court, in Liberia and in Sierra Leone [copies available]. We found a direct link between Outreach by the Special Court and the Court’s impact on peace, the rule of law, rebuilding a democratic and open society.

[Conversely,] in Libya, where NPWJ has been working since before the end of the war and where we have a strong field team, perceptions of the ICC a year ago were largely positive. One year on, it is now difficult even to talk about the ICC, as our Libyan colleagues [who are here in the room] will tell you, if you come to our side event on Monday [lunchtime].

Second, on field presence. We urge this Assembly to reaffirm the importance of a strong and continuous ICC presence in situation countries. Madam President, we certainly appreciate the challenges of establishing and maintaining a field presence during conflict and in other complex security environments. Nonetheless, that is exactly when war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide will occur. The ICC can and must do its work in these environments, as so many other international agencies do. The first rule of impact is to be there [: if you’re not there, you’re not relevant].

Third, on an ICC completion strategy. Madam President, here in The Hague, we look at the ICC and see a permanent institution. But [looking] from the perspective of a situation country, its engagement is transitory. It begins, it “does its thing”, but at some point it needs to fulfil its mandate and conclude its work. Therefore, like the ad hoc tribunals, for each situation the ICC needs a Completion Strategy. Not only to close current existing situations, but also a strategy to begin new ones with a vision and an end game, knowing what will need to have happened so that it can consider its work done; its mission accomplished.

Our thanks go to the United Kingdom for co-hosting a completion strategy side event this Saturday. We look forward to the discussion of this increasingly urgent priority.

Madam President, in the last ten years the ICC has transformed the dynamics of impunity, its very existence breaking the assumption that violence will be rewarded with power and legitimacy. The next ten years will show whether and how it will have accomplished its mission in each situation country, its impact and its legacy.

Thank you