



**UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

Statement

By

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The Under-Secretary-General For Legal Affairs
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**At the Inauguration Ceremony of the Premises of the International Residual
Mechanism For Criminal Tribunals in Arusha, Tanzania**

Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania
25 November 2016

*Your Excellency, Samia Suluhu Hassan, Vice President of the United Republic
of Tanzania,*

*Honourable Augustine Mahiga, Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African
Cooperation,*

Judge Theodor Meron, President of the Mechanism,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I am honoured to be here in Lakilaki, on the foothills of Mount Meru, for the inauguration of the premises of the Arusha branch of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

First, I would like to read a message from the Secretary-General.

[\[Secretary-General's statement\]](#)

Allow me, now, a few personal remarks.

I should start by expressing our heartfelt gratitude to the Government and people of Tanzania for their generous hospitality.



The beautiful piece of land on which we are standing – or sitting – was given to the United Nations at no cost. The road which took us up the slope was paved by the Government. The connections to the utilities were provided by the Government, as were the exemptions and other facilities necessary for the construction project. This generosity is not new; Tanzania has been a gracious and kind host for over 22 years now.

Your Excellency, Vice President Hassan, and the people of Tanzania, “asanteni saana” [Swahili for “Thank you very much”].

At the heart of this partnership is the belief that it is our collective responsibility to maintain international peace and security, to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to ensure that the rule of law prevails.

We are witnessing this shared responsibility in accountability efforts across the continent, where African States are positioning themselves at the forefront in supporting the advancement of international criminal justice.

On the west coast, the success of the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal is a result of the joint commitment and termination of Senegal, other States, the African Union and the European Union to ensure justice for the crimes committed in Chad under Hissène Habré’s regime.

Here on the east, not too far north of Arusha, there is a new undertaking to establish a Hybrid Court for South Sudan. This task is led by the African Union, in cooperation with South Sudan, and with technical assistance from my Office. Other African States will probably play a role, such as providing judges and, possibly, hosting the Court.

At the same time, the Central African Republic has established a Special Criminal Court with assistance from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission. The Court will have judges and staff from CAR and other African States.

These are only a few examples which show a deep commitment to international criminal justice, contrary to what some might think considering recent developments concerning the International Criminal Court. There are also other instances of cooperation for the prosecution of serious international crimes, including in domestic jurisdictions. In all these cases, there is a clear understanding that mutual support is essential if we are to achieve our common goal to end impunity and further achieve peace.



And so, summoning the same spirit, I call upon States in the region to intensify their assistance to the Prosecutor of the Mechanism to arrest the fugitives, so that this state-of-the-art courtroom can be put to full use.

The premises are, of course, much more than just a courtroom; and the premises are not just for the Mechanism. They are for everyone: the people of Arusha, Tanzania, the region and beyond.

The impressive collection of material in the archives building and the library of the Mechanism are resources that should be used by historians, judges, lawyers, teachers and students of the law.

The Mechanism should deepen its engagement with its future neighbours – the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the African Union Advisory Board on Corruption and the African Institute of International Law – as well as the judiciary, universities and other institutions in order to explore the possibility of creating synergies and fostering greater cooperation.

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen,

Just as the fight against impunity is a collective undertaking, so too was the construction of these premises.

I started by speaking of Tanzania’s tremendous contributions.

It is fitting that I conclude by paying tribute to others who have made the new premises a reality: the architects; Jandu Plumbers Ltd.; the United Nations General Assembly and the Office of Central Support Services; the Mechanism’s Project Manager; and the Registrar of the Mechanism, Mr. John Hocking.

Almost exactly three years ago, after signing in Dar es Salaam the Headquarters Agreement for the Mechanism, I stood on this very hilltop. The views were stunning, but, save for an odd tree and shrub, the place was bare and windswept. I must admit that I could not picture then how truly remarkable the transformation would be.

The premises that you have erected here will remind us that our work to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law continues, that the cause of justice endures, and that the hope to end impunity lives on.

Thank you.