



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO EVENT ON THE KAMPALA AMENDMENTS
TO THE ROME STATUTE
New York, 27 September 2013**

*Delivered by Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, UN Legal Counsel,
and Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs*

I am pleased to convey my warm greetings to all those taking part in this important event on the Kampala amendments to the Rome Statute and I thank the government of Liechtenstein for hosting this gathering.

Aggression is the pre-eminent international crime. The act of waging a war of aggression was prosecuted at both the Tokyo and Nuremberg Tribunals established in the aftermath of the Second World War. Yet, when States gathered together some forty years later to negotiate and adopt the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, they were not able to reach agreement on a definition of this most serious form of the unlawful use of force; and although the Rome Statute provided for the Court to have jurisdiction in respect of the crime of aggression, the Court was consequently left unable to exercise that jurisdiction.

The negotiations that culminated in the creation of the International Criminal Court were historic. But without addressing these key questions involving aggression, the work of building an edifice of international criminal justice was not yet complete.

I am honoured to have been present at the Review Conference of the Rome Statute in Kampala in 2010, where agreement was reached to amend the Rome Statute, defining the crime of aggression and setting out the conditions under which the Court shall exercise jurisdiction with respect to this crime. This was a major achievement and one in which the Principality of Liechtenstein played a central role.

Kampala completed the work of Rome. Just as important, it also completed the work of San Francisco more than 65 years ago. The Charter of the United Nations is founded on the prohibition of the use of force in international relations and on the suppression of acts of aggression. Under the Charter, the Security Council is given a key role in preventing and suppressing acts of aggression. Kampala can be viewed as completing the Charter architecture, by providing for the punishment of individuals responsible for this crime.

Eleven States have ratified the Kampala amendment to the Rome Statute, the most recent being Andorra, Cyprus, Slovenia and Uruguay. I encourage other States to follow their lead and I look forward to receiving many more instruments of ratification.

Thank you for your leadership. Please accept my best wishes for a successful event.