

**O Crime de agressão nos 20 anos do Estatuto do Tribunal Penal
Internacional
19 de abril de 2018**

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Minhas Senhoras e Meus Senhores,

É para mim um prazer e uma honra dar-vos as boas vindas a esta Conferência,
organizada pelo Departamento de Assuntos Jurídicos do MNE. Esta é testemunho, uma
vez mais, da vitalidade da ação desenvolvida neste Ministério em prol da promoção de
debates sobre os mais diversos e relevantes temas.

Em benefício dos nossos convidados internacionais, permito-me agora proferir
algumas breves palavras em inglês.

As I was saying, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to this Conference,
organized by the Department of Legal Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Allow me to begin by thanking our distinguished panellists for so promptly and kindly
accepting our invitation to participate in this Conference.

For the last century, International Law has been assuming a growing role and
importance in the relations between States. Portugal has consistently recognized

International Law as a key instrument for the safeguard of an international community that should rule itself on principles such as freedom, justice or peace.

In this spirit, Portugal has always been a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court. This institution has the purpose of fighting against the impunity of the most serious crimes of international concern, which threaten the peace, security and well-being of the World, and plays a crucial role in the international criminal justice system.

As such, an important occasion as the Twentieth Anniversary of the Rome Statute – which will be celebrated on the 17th of July – could not go without due signalling in our country. In fact, today’s Conference is only one of the many events taking place across the world throughout the year to celebrate this anniversary.

Our Conference is, as you know, dedicated to the topic “The Crime of Aggression in the 20 years of the Rome Statute”. We chose to focus on the crime of aggression, in light of the decision of the Assembly of States Parties taken during its last session, in December 2017, to activate the exercise of the Court’s jurisdiction over this crime.

This decision was the culmination of a process that started in 1998 with the adoption of the Rome Statute, where it was established that the crime of aggression would be one the four crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court. However, the exercise of such jurisdiction was made subject to the adoption of a definition of the crime of aggression and the setting out of the conditions under which the Court would exercise its jurisdiction.

Such ambitious endeavour was accomplished later in 2010, during the Review Conference that took place in Kampala. However, the exercise of the Court’s jurisdiction over this crime would require a decision in that regard by the Assembly of States Parties that was only possible after January 2017.

In line with its commitment with international criminal justice, Portugal was one of the States actively involved in the discussions on this matter that took place last December, having, alongside Brazil and New Zealand, submitted proposals containing pragmatic solutions to activate by consensus the Court's jurisdiction over this crime.

We should congratulate ourselves with the fact that, despite the intense and difficult discussions, the Assembly was able to activate the Court's jurisdiction. It was, indeed, a truly historical landmark for international criminal justice, and thus, for peace and human rights.

I hope that your discussions, here in Lisbon, will contribute to assess and disseminate the vital role of the International Criminal Court in fighting impunity now that it has at its disposal all the tools envisaged in Rome, twenty years ago.

Para finalizar, estou certa de que hoje beneficiaremos de um debate vivo e dinâmico e, sem mais delongas, passo a palavra ao nosso painel.