A Personal Tribute to Whitney R. Harris

Remarks by Judge Dr. jur. h. c. Hans-Peter Kaul

Second Vice-President of the Court

International Criminal Court

At the memorial service held on

The Danforth Campus - Washington University in Saint Louis

In Graham Chapel

May 23, 2010

Final version as delivered.
Dear Anna,

Dear friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are assembled today in honour of Whitney R. Harris, a great American and a great champion of the Rule of Law and international justice.

And Chancellor Danforth has encouraged me to repeat before this audience from St. Louis something which I said to him just 30 minutes ago: in my view, Whitney Harris was, in the world of law, one of the most known Americans in the world.

Elisabeth and I have come from The Hague to St. Louis to convey to you, Anna, but also to all present and indeed to all Americans who knew Whitney the sympathy, the respect and the admiration of the 18 Judges of the International Criminal Court, from all regions of the world, for Whitney R. Harris.

It was one, just one of the many exceptional talents of Whitney that he had a particular ability to inspire and to encourage others in the eternal quest for a more just and better world.

Exactly this, this was the role that Whitney had during the historic Rome Conference in 1998. It was such an encouragement, such an asset that Whitney Harris, the former Nuremberg prosecutor, a highly respected authority, became a source of inspiration and a trusted friend and adviser for
in particular the German ICC delegation. It will always belong to my memories how Whitney, time and again, reminded and encouraged us, not only myself but also the young members of my delegation that especially Germany should strive for an effective, functioning, independent and therefore credible future International Criminal Court.

Two years later, in October 2000, Whitney and Anna came to Berlin and we met again. It was the vision, the special wish of Whitney to be present when the German Parliament would adopt the ratification law for the future International Criminal Court. On 27 October 2000, Whitney, elegant and distinguished as ever, sat on the gallery of the Reichstag reserved for the guests of honour, the only one on this gallery above us. I myself was sitting behind Chancellor Schroeder and Foreign Minister Fischer, on the bench reserved for the senior civil servants. When the ICC law was adopted, Deputy Foreign Minister Vollmer took the floor and said,

“Dear Colleagues,

As many of you are already aware, we have as guest of honour Whitney R. Harris, a former Nuremberg Prosecutor and aide of Robert H. Jackson. May I propose that we rise from our seats in honour of his work and all what Nuremberg has done for the German people”.

All parliamentarians from all parties, from the left to the right, rose. The records of the German Bundestag note a “standing ovation and long applause”. 
Later, in the evening, Whitney, Anna and I celebrated this special day in the Hotel Adlon, opposite The Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag. When we had a glass of wine, Whitney paused a little bit and then he said, as if talking to himself:

“Hans-Peter, that Germany has now become such a steadfast supporter of international justice, this is full circle and a sign that our legacy lives on.”

Yes, Whitney, your spirit and your legacy live on and will endure.

Yes, Anna, the memory of Whitney and all what he stood for is in our heart.