



Sixth Committee
United Nations General Assembly 78th Session

Statement of Ireland on Agenda Item 80:

'Crimes Against Humanity'

Delivered by James Kirk
Legal Adviser, Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations

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– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

1. Chair,
2. Ireland is a strong proponent for the elaboration of a convention on the basis of the International Law Commission's draft articles on crimes against humanity, in accordance with the Commission's recommendation. We have been clear in our previous statements to this Committee that we see this as the best way to close what is a significant gap in the international treaty law framework.
3. We acknowledged that not all States were ready to take this step when we supported last year's resolution creating resumed sessions. These sessions allow those States that requested more time for consideration the opportunity to further reflect on the draft articles, while nonetheless ensuring that work on this vitally important topic continues to move forward.
4. We welcomed the opportunity in April to have substantive and detailed discussions on the draft articles. We thank the Bureau and Secretariat for facilitating the resumed session, and all delegations for their constructive engagement. Although we did not all agree on every issue, a key takeaway from the session was that the majority of States are in favour of the elaboration of a convention.
5. The fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes, including crimes against humanity, is more important than ever. We see this year's Sixth Committee debate, which falls between the two dedicated resumed sessions, as a moment to take stock. This is the fifth time that Sixth Committee in this format has discussed the draft articles concluded by the ILC. While we always welcome discussion, we now also urge action.
6. We were particularly glad to see the adoption of the Ljubljana – Hague Convention in May of this year, which will enable countries to cooperate internationally in the investigation and prosecution of the most serious international crimes. We have long

said that this Convention is complementary to our endeavours on crimes against humanity, in that both have the potential to contribute in a practical and significant way to the fight against impunity. The adoption of the Ljubljana – Hague Convention demonstrates that progress can and will be made in achieving accountability for international crimes.

7. We look forward to submitting written comments on the draft articles by the end of this year. We also look forward to participating in next year's resumed session, where we hope that the issues on which there was divergence last April will be narrowed.
8. The purpose of the United Nations is, most fundamentally, the maintenance of international peace and security. Crimes against humanity are a direct threat to this aim. Our goal in progressing this topic is not just to create a new convention, but to prevent the commission of these crimes, and to ensure that those who do commit them are punished. Our progress, or our stasis, sends a strong signal to those who think that they can commit crimes against humanity without repercussion. We must work together, including at next April's resumed session, to ensure that the clear message is that those who commit crimes against humanity will face justice.
9. Thank you.