



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

**DR. GRACE EYOMA
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AT THE

**SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON

**THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL
JURISDICTION
(AGENDA: ITEM 84)**

NEW YORK, 17 OCTOBER 2012

Mr. Chairman,

Nigeria welcomes the Secretary General's report contained in A/67/116 on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 66/103.

2. The report provides an overview of comments by Governments on their general application and understanding of the subject. This principle is an indisputably important tenet of international law that ensures that perpetrators of the most heinous crimes are held accountable. The increasingly challenging times for the international community have contributed to the copious clamor for safety, security and the design of methods to strengthen the principle's application.

3. In this regard, we share the view expressed by some Member States on the need to define what the terminology or definition of Universal Jurisdiction encompasses and how far it extends. The need for this clarity is to ensure its unbiased application and resist its selective application or the exploitation of the law for settling political scores. To this end, we welcome the establishment of a Working Group that we hope will engage in robust discussions on this topic, in accordance with Resolution 66/103, and look forward to engaging in a constructive manner for a truly universal acceptance on this complex issue. My delegation maintains the view that universal jurisdiction should always be exercised in good faith and in accordance with other principles of international law, including the rule of law, the sovereign equality of States and immunity of the State Officials .

Mr. Chairman,

4. The time has come for us to narrow our views and agree on real substance especially as it concerns the assertion of criminal jurisdiction by a State, for certain grave offenses. We encourage all member States to

engage actively in these discussions to identify the scope and limits of the application of this important principle. We look forward to further elucidation and consensus-building that would not only strengthen the application of universal jurisdiction but will most importantly give legitimacy and credibility of its usage consistent with acceptable international law.

5. Thank you Mr. Chairman.