



**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY
VÉRIFIER AU PRONONCÉ**

**STATEMENT BY
MR. GILES NORMAN
LEGAL ADVISOR
PERMANENT MISSION OF CANADA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE 68TH SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION
STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF CANZ**

NEW YORK, 17 OCTOBER 2013

**DÉCLARATION DE
M. GILES NORMAN,
CONSEILLER (AFFAIRES JURIDIQUES)
DE LA MISSION PERMANENTE DU CANADA AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES**

**À LA SIXIÈME COMMISSION DE LA 68^E SESSION
DE L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE DES NATIONS UNIES
LA PORTÉE ET L'APPLICATION DU PRINCIPE DE COMPÉTENCE UNIVERSELLE
DÉCLARATION AU NOM DU CANADA, DE L'AUSTRALIE ET DE LA NOUVELLE-
ZÉLANDE**

NEW YORK, LE 17 OCTOBRE 2013

Mr Chair,

I have the honour of speaking today on behalf of New Zealand and Australia, as well as Canada.

CANZ recognises universal jurisdiction as an established principle of international law. Universal jurisdiction confers on every State the ability to exercise criminal jurisdiction over those individuals responsible for the most serious crimes of international concern. Such crimes attack the interests of humankind; and as such it is in the interests of all States to ensure that perpetrators are held to account.

Australia, Canada and New Zealand have long recognised universal jurisdiction over the most serious international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

Application of universal jurisdiction is justified regardless of where the conduct occurs or the nationality of the perpetrator and does not require any other links between the crime and the prosecuting State.

CANZ maintains that primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting the most serious international crimes should rest with the State in which the conduct occurred. States where the crimes were committed benefit most from the transparency of a trial and the accountability of a verdict. In addition, the State where the conduct occurred is also best placed to see that justice is done, because they have the best access to the relevant evidence, witnesses and victims.

At the same time, universal jurisdiction provides an important, complementary mechanism to ensure accountability for the most serious crimes where the territorial State is either unable or unwilling to exercise jurisdiction. The principle of universal jurisdiction thereby assists with ensuring that individuals who commit such crimes will not enjoy safe haven anywhere in the world.

Mr Chair

Universal jurisdiction should always be exercised in good faith and in a manner that is consistent with other principles and rules of international law. It is essential that the rule of law is maintained and all accused are guaranteed an impartial, prompt and fair trial.

CANZ applauds the work of those States that have incorporated universal jurisdiction over grave crimes into their domestic legislation and encourages others to do the same.

CANZ welcomes the newly created working group and looks forward to continuing a thorough discussion of the scope and application of universal jurisdiction.