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**STATEMENT
ON BEHALF OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA**

BY

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**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE GAMBIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS**

BEFORE THE SIXTH COMMITTEE

74TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNDER AGENDA ITEM 87

**“THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF
UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION”**

New York, 16th October 2019

Mr. Chair,

Allow me once again to thank you for the manner in which you are steering our work in this committee. My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by The Gambia on behalf of the African Group. We thank the Secretary-General for his report as contained in document **A/74/144**.

The republic of The Gambia attaches great importance to this agenda item **“The Scope and Application of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction”**. The republic of The Gambia regrets that 9 - 10 years ago, African Group requested for this agenda item to be included in the agenda of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly, simply because the noble purpose of this legal regime has in some instances been undermined by politics.

Mr. Chair,

The Gambia recognizes that universal jurisdiction is a principle of international law seeking to end impunity by committing perpetrators of heinous crimes to justice. The Gambia therefore, encourages and calls for clarity and guidance in relation to crimes that amount to the threshold that this principle of universal jurisdiction seeks to address.

We take note of the views of many states concerning the purpose of universal jurisdiction principle, which is to ensure that individuals who commit grave offences, such as war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity, do not enjoy impunity and are brought to justice where ever they are hiding.

The Gambia wishes to stress the importance of respecting other international law norms in the application of universal jurisdiction, including the sovereign equality of states and the existing territorial jurisdiction of all states.

Mr. Chair,

In closing, The Republic of The Gambia welcomes the decision of the International Law Commission (ILC) to place this topic on its long-term programme of work, with a view to study and provide legal clarity in international law. We take due note that this topic has been especially important to the African States for many years. Therefore, it is our sincere hope that, the debate of the current item will continue in the Sixth Committee in order to continue deliberations over the outstanding issues without prejudice to the consideration of the topic and related issues in other forums of the United Nations.

I thank you.