

**76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 83. Crimes against Humanity
15 October 2021
Statement of Estonia**

Madam Chair,

As this is the first time Estonia is taking the floor during this session, allow me to congratulate Madam Chair and other bureau members upon their election and for their work in the bureau of the Sixth Committee during the 76th Session of the General Assembly.

Estonia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.

We reiterate our firm commitment to rules based international order. Fighting against impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole is our common responsibility and remains essential for sustainable peace, security and reconciliation.

With regard to international treaty law framework, we note that while there exist conventions for genocide and war crimes, yet there is no such convention with regard to crimes against humanity.

Unfortunately, the civilian population all over the world continues to be subjected to these grave crimes, and perpetrators continue to act with impunity. It is our firm view that the international community must step up its efforts and do more to prevent and punish these heinous crimes.

The International Law Commission (ILC) endeavoured to assist States in closing the gap in treaty law. The ILC completed its extensive work with the adoption of draft articles on prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity in 2019. During the drafting process, the ILC had a transparent and open procedure for all interested stakeholders to bolster the criminal justice system.

The draft articles adopted by the International Law Commission and forwarded to the Sixth Committee in 2019 reflect the call for further efforts of the international community to end impunity for perpetrators of crimes against humanity and to provide justice for victims of such crimes.

Madam Chair,

Estonia continues to firmly support the elaboration of a Convention on crimes against humanity on the basis of the draft articles, as recommended by the ILC, preferably by an international conference of plenipotentiaries.

The elaboration of a Convention on the elimination and prevention of crimes against humanity will fill the current gap in the international treaty law and strengthen the international criminal law system. Alongside the international treaties on genocide and war crimes, a new Convention will complement the Rome Statute and be fully in line with its basic principle of complementarity.

A new Convention will also assist, inspire and oblige states to review their national laws and strengthen international cooperation to stand against the most serious international crimes and fight impunity.

In the last two sessions of the Sixth Committee, there has been substantial support for the ILC's recommendation for an elaboration of a convention on the basis of the draft articles.

Estonia continues to support moving forward with inclusive and substantive discussions on the draft articles leading to a negotiation process. In order to enable such progress, Estonia supports establishing a clear timeline and mandate for these discussions in an appropriate forum.

Estonia remains ready to contribute constructively to achieve tangible progress on this very important topic.

Thank you.