



**PERMANENT MISSION OF SINGAPORE  
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**STATEMENT BY MR KENNETH WONG, DELEGATE TO THE 76<sup>TH</sup>  
SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON  
AGENDA ITEM 86, THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE  
PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION, SIXTH COMMITTEE,  
21 OCTOBER 2021**

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Mdm Chair,

1 We thank the Secretary-General for his report on this agenda item.

2 The principle of universal jurisdiction is based on a recognition that certain crimes are so heinous, and of such exceptional gravity, that their commission shocks the conscience of all humanity. The international community has the common interest and shared responsibility in combating such crimes and to support the global commitment to achieving justice for victims.

3 Singapore's views on this topic are well known. My delegation would like to reiterate four key points:

(a) First, the principle of universal jurisdiction should only be applied in respect of particularly grave crimes that affect the international community as a whole. These are crimes to which the international community has generally agreed it would be appropriate to apply the principle of universal jurisdiction.

(b) Second, universal jurisdiction is a principle of customary international law. In determining whether universal jurisdiction is applicable to a particular crime, we must closely analyse State practice and *opinio juris*. It should also be distinguished from the exercise of jurisdiction provided for in treaties or the exercise of jurisdiction by international tribunals constituted under specific treaty regimes. These concepts have their own specific sets of juridical bases, rationales, objectives and considerations.

(c) Third, universal jurisdiction cannot be exercised in isolation from, or to the exclusion of, other applicable principles of international law. These include the immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, State sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

(d) Finally, the principle of universal jurisdiction is not and should not be the primary basis for the exercise of criminal jurisdiction by States. It should only be invoked as a last resort, in situations where no State is able or willing to exercise the other established bases of jurisdiction, including on the principles of territoriality and nationality.

4 Mdm Chair, we believe that broad consensus may be found on these key areas. We hope that they will serve as a stable platform upon which Member States can work together towards a substantive and productive outcome.

5 Thank you.