

# Canada

**Crimes Against Humanity**  
**Canada, Australia and New Zealand Statement**  
**(CANZ- Item 79)**

**UNGA 77-Sixth Committee (October 2022)**

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Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair.

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of Australia and New Zealand as well as my own country, Canada.

Crimes against humanity, are among the most serious crimes of international concern. Confronted with a rise in atrocity situations worldwide, we must remain steadfast in our efforts to prevent and punish serious international crimes.

However, while genocide and war crimes have long been addressed by multilateral treaties, there is currently no universal convention to address crimes against humanity, and this remains a significant gap in the international accountability framework.

We support progress toward a Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity. It would complement existing treaty law for international core crimes, and would reinforce international efforts aimed at ensuring proper accountability and bringing perpetrators of crimes against humanity to justice.

CANZ countries appreciate the extensive work of the International Law Commission on the Draft Articles on Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity, adopted in 2019 at the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission. This topic was included on the Commission's agenda for many years, and our countries actively contributed to the consultation process. In particular, we were pleased with the Commission's decision to remove the definition of "gender" from the second version of the Draft Articles.

However, three years on, we are concerned that to date the Sixth Committee has been unable to move this discussion forward, as recommended by the ILC, beyond merely taking note of the Commission's Draft Articles.

While we understand the different levels of comfort that exist among United Nations Member States to proceed directly to the elaboration of a convention, we believe that there exist suitable frameworks to advance our discussions, while addressing outstanding concerns in an open and inclusive manner.

In this regard, CANZ countries are disappointed that the Sixth Committee has not yet agreed on an appropriate procedural way forward, based on flexibility and compromise.

As we embark upon this session's discussions, our countries reiterate the need to create a structured process with a clear timetable and next steps. Such an approach does not pre-suppose the outcome of those deliberations. Rather, it will allow this Assembly to deepen our deliberations, offering the space needed to consider aspects requiring further precision and clarification, through appropriate and dedicated dialogue.

CANZ countries look forward to working with Member States to develop an effective procedural pathway to move forward. In this regard, we have cosponsored the proposal made by Mexico on behalf of a cross regional group of countries to establish an AdHoc Committee as a dedicated forum to discuss this item, and we encourage others to support this resolution. Doing so will allow the Sixth Committee to carry forward the important work of the International Law Commission on crimes against humanity, and will reinforce our common efforts to strengthen accountability for the commission of the most serious crimes of international concern.

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair.