



**United Nations Sixth Committee – 77<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Statement of Ireland**

**on Agenda item 78:**

**"Crimes against Humanity"**

*10 October 2022*

**Statement by Ambassador Fergal Mythen**

**[check against delivery]**

1. Thank you, Mr Chairperson.
2. At the outset, as this is our first time taking the floor, Ireland wishes to congratulate the Chair and Bureau on your election, and to assure you of our support for your work.
3. Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union, and wishes to make the following further comments.

4. Crimes against humanity are among the most serious of all international crimes, and yet to date, the international community has failed to agree upon, and adopt, a stand-alone legal instrument criminalising these acts.
5. It is high time for the international community to address this significant gap in the international treaty law framework.
6. This is the fourth occasion on which the draft articles on Crimes against Humanity, concluded by the International Law Commission, are before the Sixth Committee. The time has now come to make real progress, which we still believe the majority of States favour.
7. The elaboration of an international convention would send an important message that impunity for those who commit crimes against humanity will not be tolerated.
8. As we have stated at the Sixth Committee previously, Ireland strongly supports the recommendation of the International Law Commission to elaborate a convention on Crimes against Humanity, and we believe that

the draft articles, concluded by the Commission, provide a strong foundation for the elaboration of such a convention.

9. However, we accept that not all States are in a position to commit to that step. In the circumstances, Ireland supports the draft resolution on this agenda item before the Sixth Committee, which proposes the establishment of an *Ad Hoc* Committee to examine the draft articles on Crimes against Humanity, exchange substantive views, and consider further the recommendation of the International Law Commission for the elaboration of a convention. The text also proposes that the Ad Hoc Committee would submit a report on the outcome of its deliberations to the General Assembly next year.
10. In Ireland's view, this represents a balanced and fair approach. The establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee would allow States the time and space to reflect on the draft articles on Crimes against Humanity, thereby honouring and progressing the important work of the International Law Commission on this subject.

11. Ireland recalls, however, that the end goal is not simply the elaboration of an international convention. Rather, it is the creation of an international framework which aims to prevent the commission of crimes against humanity and to punish perpetrators when such crimes are committed.
  
12. The ILC draft Articles on Crimes against Humanity are complemented by the International Initiative for the development of a Multilateral Treaty for Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition in Domestic Prosecution of Atrocity Crimes. Ireland views both endeavours as very important steps towards achieving greater accountability for the commission of atrocity crimes, denying impunity for those responsible. Ireland encourages all States to be flexible and open-minded in our discussions and to seize the opportunity to make real progress this year on this most important topic.
  
13. I thank you, Mr Chairperson.