



11 October 2022

Statement by Loureen Sayej, Third Secretary, before the 77th Session of the General Assembly Meeting of the Sixth Committee on Crimes Against Humanity (Agenda Item 78)

Mr. Chair,

The State of Palestine has been consistent and clear in its firm position that accountability for the most serious crimes of concern for the international community as a whole is essential for the integrity and sustainability of our international law-based order.

Justice for victims of such crimes is a collective obligation.

As parties to the Rome Statute, we have long called for its universalization and have called on States to join us in ending the dangerous cycle of impunity that has long haunted both, our peoples and the development of international law.

In this regard, the State of Palestine supports the recommendations of the International Law Commission to elaborate a Convention, on the basis of the Crimes Against Humanity Draft Articles, and reflecting well-established principles of customary international law.

We attach great importance to the work of the International Law Commission and recognize the need for the 6th Committee to uphold its role in contributing to the elaboration of instruments that further the rule of international law.

It is time that the exceptional status of Crimes Against Humanity, as crimes lacking a Convention, come to an end. This lacuna calls for detailed debate and discussion to allow for the elaboration of a universal and collective Convention.

The Draft Articles and the Convention is not merely a legal exercise. They are rather the practical efforts of the international community to put the forces of international law at the service of the protection of humanity when it is most threatened; leaving no victim behind and no perpetrator immune, and refusing to let the law be subjected to the whims of political powers.

The crimes we seek to codify and punish, whether extermination, forcible transfer, apartheid, persecution, murder, enslavement, torture or rape, have been systematic, widespread, devastating, and persistent. This demands immediate action, and we, as a community of nations, can neither dismiss the issue nor delay it perpetually.

We stand ready to work with all States towards this objective, which requires collective and concerted action, and which must unite all of us.