



78th session of the Sixth Committee

Crimes against Humanity

(Agenda item 80)

Statement by Portugal – Ambassador Ana Paula Zacarias (Permanent Representative)

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Portugal aligns itself with the statement that was earlier delivered by the European Union, on behalf of the EU and its Member States, and by the Gambia, on behalf of a cross-regional group of countries, and wishes to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

The position of Portugal regarding this topic has been made clear during our discussions in the past years and remains unchanged.

We maintain our belief that it is possible and imperative for States to follow the recommendation of the International Law Commission and convene a diplomatic conference to negotiate and adopt a convention on the basis of the Draft Articles on Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity.



Such an international legally binding instrument would be one more step in the common goal of the international law community to make sure that crimes against humanity do not go unpunished.

Last session, we were able to reach a decision that allowed this Committee to benefit from a dedicated, structured space where a legal debate could be held; a space where Member States could further the understanding of each other's' positions and work through diverging views regarding the work of the ILC on this important topic.

We welcome the substantive, constructive dialogue that we witnessed during the first resumed session, in April this year, and we are encouraged by the positive spirit that permeated the discussions, as well as by the progress we made in terms of fleshing out delegations' concerns and bridging existing differences.

We remain fully committed with the process agreed by the Sixth Committee. Accordingly, we will continue to engage constructively, and encourage all delegations to do likewise, both intersessionally and during the second resumed session, with the view to taking a decision on this matter at the 79th session of the General Assembly.



Mr. Chair,

In line with the statements made by my delegation in the past, we would like to bring to attention that, in May, the Ljubljana-The Hague Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation and Prosecution of the Crime of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and other International Crimes was adopted. This treaty, as its title suggests, has as its purpose enhancing cooperation between States regarding the most serious crimes, including Crimes against Humanity.

We would like to take this opportunity to praise all those that have contributed to this outstanding accomplishment. We stress once again that the existence of this Convention should not preclude us from moving forward in the discussion of these Draft Articles. As stated before, Portugal remains convinced that they can be implemented together towards our common goal of setting an effective and comprehensive international legal framework for fighting impunity and ensuring accountability for Crimes against Humanity.



Mr. Chair,

Let me conclude by reiterating the commitment of my delegation to continuing to participate in an active and constructive manner in the discussion of this agenda item, with a view to reaching true progress on Crimes Against Humanity.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.