



Permanent Mission of Iceland
to the United Nations

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Honourable Chair.

I am speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and my own country Iceland.

Chair,

I would like to begin by quoting resolution 77/249 of the General Assembly, in which it mandated our discussions this week:

Deeply disturbed by the persistence of crimes against humanity, and recognizing the need to prevent and punish such crimes, which are among the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole.

By these words, the General Assembly, by consensus, recognized that these serious international crimes need to be prevented and punished, sending a strong signal to the victims and survivors of crimes against humanity that their suffering has not gone unnoticed.

Ultimately, a new UN convention on crimes against humanity should be adopted as a sign of respect for the survivors of these shocking crimes, to prevent new suffering – and to honour the memory of all those who did not survive.

The new convention would not only help States to adopt and harmonize national laws relating to crimes against humanity, and promote more effective inter-State cooperation on the prevention, investigation and prosecution of such crimes can also change the possible perception that the victims of some international crimes are more deserving of justice than others. In plain words, it simply makes no sense that there is still a gap in international law in terms of prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity, a crime which is prohibited as

a peremptory norm under international law. By comparison, treaties on genocide and war crimes have existed for decades.

Chair,

the Nordic countries thank all delegates for rich and constructive discussions this week, as well as during the resumed session last year and through written comments. Our mandate was to exchange substantive views on all aspects of the draft articles. This certainly has been the case.

As the Nordic countries see it, the time is now ripe to move on. The Draft Articles prepared by the International Law Commission, form a solid basis for negotiations and as we have heard again this week, they enjoy a very high level of support among delegations.

Chair,

The Nordic countries continue to be deeply disturbed by the persistence of crimes against humanity. They are among the most serious international crimes, of concern to the international community as a whole. Fighting impunity for them is a matter of urgency.

I thank you.