



SLOVENIA

STATEMENT

BY

**Ms Nataša Šebenik, Minister Plenipotentiary and Legal Adviser at the Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations on**

Agenda item 84: Scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

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Mr/Madam Chair,

Slovenia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and, in its national capacity, would like to contribute further to this debate.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction, and the Member States and observers for their contributions.

Mr/Madam Chair,

Universal jurisdiction is an invaluable tool for ensuring accountability, providing redress for victims and preventing impunity for crimes that concern broader international community. It provides an important complementary legal frame to any competent international tribunal and ensures that persons accused of serious crimes can be held accountable in situations where the State concerned is unwilling or unable to properly exercise its jurisdiction.

Regardless of the divergent views and practices of States concerning the scope and application of universal jurisdiction, its exercise could help to fill jurisdictional gaps and eliminate other obstacles in determining criminal responsibility for such crimes.

It is encouraging that in recent years, national judicial authorities have increasingly invoked universal jurisdiction to launch investigations with regard to the atrocities in several countries and have successfully exercised judicial proceedings on this basis. .

Mr/Madam Chair,

In this respect, the international community took another step towards ensuring accountability. I am glad to inform that Slovenia, together with Argentina, Belgium, the Netherlands, , Mongolia and Senegal, successfully carried out the the MLA initiative.

At the Diplomatic Conference in Ljubljana in May this year after two weeks of intense negotiations, 68 States present at the Conference adopted 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. The convention will serve as a tool that will strengthen the common framework of substantive criminal law provisions and international cooperation tools thus allowing its States Parties to efficiently act against individuals who may not otherwise be held accountable for the most heinous crimes. I would like to thank all states being present at the Diplomatic Conference in Ljubljana for their constructive approach and representatives of International Organizations and civil society for their valuable contribution to adopt this important treaty.

The Ljubljana-The Hague Convention, with its well-defined procedures for mutual legal assistance and extradition, is the legal basis that will, for the first time in history, allow countries to expeditiously cooperate with each other on a systematic basis in the

prosecution of the most serious international crimes. This is therefore a key instrument that will enable States to effectively exercise universal jurisdiction.

Furthermore, States also included in the Convention obligation to establish universal jurisdiction for international crimes, thereby recognising its importance in closing the gap in fighting impunity, which reflects the progressive development of international law.

The Convention signing conference will be held in The Hague on 14 and 15 February next year, and I would kindly invite all States to join us in signing this incredibly important document.

I thank you, Mr /Madam Chair.