

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**



**STATEMENT BY AMB. HUSSEIN ATHMAN KATTANGA, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS AT THE 78<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 84**

*“The Scope and Application of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction”*  
**New York, 16 October 2023**

*Check against delivery*

**Mr. Chairperson,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, as this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor; allow me to join other delegations who have spoken before me in congratulating you Mr. Chair, and other members of the bureau on your election to preside over the work of this Committee for the period of the 78<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in discharging your responsibilities.
2. My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Uganda on behalf of the African Group and Iran on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). I would like to make additional remarks in my national capacity on agenda item 84.
3. My delegation notes with appreciation the Secretary-General's report on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction of July 2023 (document A/78/130) and subsequent reports that contain information and observations outlining the national practice of States regarding the application of the principle. From the reports, Tanzania has taken further note of divergent views regarding the scope and application of the principle.

**Mr. Chair**

4. I wish to recall that agenda item 84, entitled "The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction", and was included in the agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly (2009) at the request of the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of the Group of African States following the thorough deliberations within the African Union.
  
5. While reiterating the pressing need to achieve consensus and understanding by the Member States on the foundation and scope of the principle of universal jurisdiction and for an in-depth legal analysis thereof, Tanzania calls for continued constructive discussion on this agenda item. During our discussion, we should also avoid the politicization of the principle of universal jurisdiction at the expense of State sovereignty.
  
6. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the General Assembly's decision to establish, at its seventy-ninth session, a working group of the Sixth Committee to continue to undertake a thorough discussion of the scope and application of universal jurisdiction and invited the working group to consider and comment on the question "on the relevant elements of a working concept of universal jurisdiction. The working group will be open to all member States, and we take this opportunity to encourage all member states to participate in the deliberations.

**Mr. Chair**

7. Tanzania fully subscribes to and supports the principle of universal jurisdiction within the context of fighting impunity and the need to punish perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. As many States do, Tanzania is concerned about its ad hoc and arbitrary application, particularly towards African leaders. The application of this principle has to be consistent with international law and the conduct of international relations.
  
8. Before I conclude my remarks, I wish to reaffirm that Tanzania is a strong proponent of a rules-based international order. Tanzania supports the use of universal jurisdiction to combat impunity for the most serious international crimes; however, the definition of the principle and the rules for its application must be clearly established to avoid selectivity, abuse and politically motivated application of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction.
  
9. For over a decade, this agenda item has been in the working programme of the Sixth Committee, which I believe is due to its relevancy in maintaining the rule of law at the international level and the peaceful conduct of diplomatic relations. To this end, our appeal is for States to exercise flexibility in the discussions to provide a sound basis for a legal and systemic framework which adheres to the dictates of the United Nations Charter, principles and norms of customary international law.

***I thank you for your kind attention.***



