



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**GEORGE SHADRACK KAMANDA**

**First Secretary**

**at the 79<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Agenda item 80:**

**“Crimes Against Humanity”**

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**Chair,**  
**Excellencies,**  
**Distinguished Delegates,**

1. The delegation of Sierra Leone is delighted to take the floor on this important agenda item - 'Crimes against humanity.' We align our statement to the statement delivered by the Distinguished Representative of Uganda on behalf of the African Group.
2. We thank the **chair and co-facilitators** of the first and second resumed sessions for their commendable work, as outlined in the co-facilitators' oral reports, which formed the basis of the Chair's written report and annexed thereto, adopted by the Sixth Committee at the 47th meeting, pursuant to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 77/249.
3. At the outset, Sierra Leone continues to be deeply concerned that we deliberate this agenda item amidst the regrettable and unacceptable continuing perpetration of crimes against humanity and with seeming impunity.

4. Sierra Leone wishes to highlight the following three points: **First**, the delegation of Sierra Leone wishes to reaffirm its expression of support for action to be taken on the **recommendation of the International Law Commission (ILC) contained in paragraph 42** of its report on the work of its seventy-first session, **to in particular, elaborate “a convention by the General Assembly or by an international conference of plenipotentiaries on the basis of the draft articles,”** as contained in General Assembly resolution **A/77/249**.
5. Given Sierra Leone’s experience, recent peace-building and transitional justice history as well as support for accountability, **Sierra Leone is pleased to express its willingness to foster the necessary partnership to host the ILC recommended diplomatic conference.**
6. We further **welcome** the constructive exchange of substantive views by member States during the first and second resumed sessions, including in an interactive format, on all aspects of the draft articles, and to consider further the recommendation of the ILC.

7. We **thank** Member States for advancing the discussion by submitting comments and observations on this important topic. We see the constructive engagement **as the collective will** of member States **across regions** to make progress in considering the substance of the draft articles and the ILC's recommendation.
8. Sierra Leone is therefore pleased to be a **co-sponsor of the draft resolution, submitted by a cross-regional group of member States, since timely and proactive action on the ILC recommendation will** be the most effective path toward elevating crimes against humanity to the level of war crimes and genocide, with its own specific treaty, and which will require States within their national law to prevent and punish such crimes, and to cooperate to end them.
9. In negotiating a new treaty on Crimes Against Humanity, Sierra Leone will always be guided by the need to achieve a universal treaty to fill the existing gap and **ensure effective national prosecutions**. This will be **consistent with the Rome Statute complementarity** principle, which underpins the Rome Statute and **emphasizes the primacy of national prosecutions** for one of the most egregious crimes known to international law. This also means that the

future treaty on Crimes Against Humanity must be complementary to existing obligations and **implementable for States.**

**Chair,**

10. Our next two points relate to **two substantive proposals** we put forward in the resumed sessions. We highlight them and urge the **additional support of other member States** and **cross-regional support.** Our **second point** relates to the identified legal gaps that result in manifest impunity for **slavery and slave trade crimes** under the Rome Statute, which the ILC transplanted in the draft articles on Crimes Against Humanity.
11. We have submitted the proposal to amend the Rome Statute to enumerate, inter alia, "**the slave trade** as Crimes Against Humanity (CAH) under Article 7". These proposed amendments aim to address the gaps evident in the draft article because of the legal transplantation by the ILC. The current draft articles **do not contain provisions** for the slave trade and slavery even though the legal bases for slavery

and the slave trade are firmly established in international law.

12. The explicit enumeration of the slave trade and slavery in the proposed Crimes Against Humanity treaty would send **a strong signal** to the victims in the comprehensive acknowledgment of and redress for their harms. **Much like the African Group, we urge for any future convention on crimes against humanity to include slavery and the slave trade as crimes against humanity.**

13. To our **third point**, Sierra Leone is pleased to note that a number of delegations have expressed the view that it would be desirable for any future convention to have a monitoring mechanism. Sierra Leone continues to highlight the significance of a **monitoring body or mechanism** to be included in a future crime against humanity convention for effective implementation. We believe that States should seriously consider including a monitoring mechanism, which could be based on available precedents, including the **Human Rights Committee and the Committee against Torture.**

14. As such, **a monitoring body or mechanism should reflect the lessons learned and best practices developed by such bodies to lessen reporting burdens on States.** It may be a State-driven mechanism, but of course, it could be comprised of independent experts serving in their personal capacities. This may best assist with properly monitoring and implementing future crimes against humanity treaty, particularly **if such a mechanism is also given a capacity-building and technical assistance mandate, which we deem as an imperative.**

15. Let me close by restating that the draft articles contribute **significantly to the present global thinking on preventing and punishing crimes against humanity.** With the draft resolution that has been submitted, proposing the convening of a United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity **to elaborate and conclude** a legally binding instrument, we now have the critical opportunity **to take one historical giant leap to foster a climate of accountability to end impunity for all atrocity crimes.**

I thank you.