



**Statement by the Republic of Cyprus**

**By Mr. Theodoulos Pittakis,**

**Counsellor,**

**Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cyprus to the UN**

**at the Sixth Committee**

**on the agenda item 80:  
"Crimes against humanity"**

**United Nations**

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Mr./Madame Chair

Cyprus fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and with the cross-regional statement made from Sierra Leone and wishes to add the following points in its national capacity.

As mentioned during the second resumed session last April, Cyprus fully supports the elaboration of an international Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity, as recommended by the International Law Commission.

We believe that the draft articles prepared by the ILC, provide a solid basis for this Convention.

Hence, my delegation welcomes the initiative of Mexico and The Gambia to table a draft resolution, convening a UN Conference of Plenipotentiaries on Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity, to elaborate and conclude a legally binding instrument on prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity. Cyprus is among the seventy states that have co-sponsored this draft resolution.

Crimes against humanity continue to be perpetrated every day around the world. An international legally binding instrument in this area is a sine qua non for international criminal law, human rights, rule of law, peace and security.

A legally binding international instrument in this area will help harmonizing national laws relating to the definition and criteria for the prevention and punishment of these heinous crimes; it will also provide legal mechanisms to deter such conduct *ab initio*, while ensuring accountability *ex post*, by incorporating crimes against humanity in national legal systems and ensure that offenders of such crimes can also be prosecuted at national level; finally it will facilitate the development of an effective network of inter-state cooperation on the prevention, investigation and prosecution of these crimes, which is a prerequisite to effectively address impunity.

The Rome Statute, the closest international legally binding instrument, codifying customary international law in this area, does not resolve the legal gap, as it does not impose immediate obligations of prevention or criminalization at the domestic level, nor does it establish a direct obligation or framework for international cooperation in relation to national investigations and prosecutions.

Mr. Chair,

Five years have elapsed since ILC recommended the elaboration of a convention in this area. Since then, this item has been discussed on numerous occasions in

the Sixth Committee, including the two resumed sessions in spring of 2023 and 2024, during which states engaged on an extensive and substantive exchange of views. Further, a solid body of comments and reports has been produced.

There's progress and we should now proceed towards our next step.

My delegation takes note of all views, comments and concerns expressed during the debates of the Sixth Committee on this topic.

An international conference provides an ideal forum for constructive dialogue to further elaborate on issues of divergence to resolve them. States have the sovereign right to decide whether to participate in the negotiations, without prejudice to their positions during this conference and to the future Convention.

Further to the General Assembly's Resolution 77/249 (Dec.2022), the Sixth Committee will, in few weeks, adopt a decision on the ILC's recommendation. It is our firm belief that we must now move to the next step.

Cyprus, once more, wishes to express its support to the draft resolution submitted by Mexico and the Gambia and looks forward to its adoption by consensus.

Thank you.