



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

NEW YORK, 13 OCTOBER 2023

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SIXTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY Ms. MERHABA HASLER, ADVISER LEGAL AFFAIRS

THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

Chair,

What was once new territory for domestic prosecutors and judges has now become an important trend in international criminal justice, with concrete and far-reaching effects. Liechtenstein welcomes these encouraging developments with respect to the principle of universal jurisdiction. An ever-greater number of national judiciaries are invoking the principle of universal jurisdiction to start investigations and criminal proceedings concerning international crimes. German courts, in particular, have been a champion of universal jurisdiction. We commend their work pursuing atrocity cases committed in Syria. By invoking universal jurisdiction, domestic prosecutors and judges can hold perpetrators of the most serious international crimes to account, but also and most notably bring justice to the victims.

We also recall that the prosecution of core international crimes needs to ensure our judiciaries work well within the larger system of international justice. In this regard, we commend in particular the work of the UN-mandated International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) for Syria, which assisted the Koblenz Court in particular in securing convictions for high level Syrian officials for crimes against humanity. The IIIM prepares case files for prosecutions in

courts that have jurisdiction over crimes committed in Syria, irrespective of the affiliation of the perpetrators. The IIIM and other similar UN-mandated accountability mechanisms play a critical role in the fight against impunity for atrocity crimes when working in conjunction with the States invoking universal jurisdiction. In this context, we are also closely observing ongoing discussions on the concept of pooled universal jurisdiction, wherein national courts collaborate in addressing the most serious crimes under international law.

We also recall that the Rome Statute of the ICC has important provisions that allow for State cooperation with the ICC for the purposes of domestic prosecutions. We therefore call upon all UN member States that have not yet done so to join the Rome Statute and its amendments and implement it into their national criminal codes.

Chair,

The more national judiciaries carry out their responsibilities in line with the principle of universal jurisdiction, the less the burden on our international justice system. Both systems work hand-in-hand. In this regard, the ILC could assist States by formulating guidelines or drawing conclusions clarifying the nature, scope, limits and procedural safeguards that guide the proper application of universal jurisdiction.

We must use all of the tools in our justice toolbox to end impunity for the core international crimes: the crime of aggression, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The system of justice for these crimes can only be as strong as we collectively empower it to be.

I thank you.