

Statement of the Republic of Estonia
75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 81. Crimes against Humanity
14 October 2020

Madame Chair,

We align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the European Union. Estonia reiterates its firm commitment to rules based international order. Respect for and promotion of international law, humanitarian law and human rights are at the core of our foreign policy.

Madame Chair,

It is our common responsibility to take a stance when fight against impunity for crimes against humanity and pursuit of justice are at stake – these are essential components of sustainable peace, security and reconciliation.

The International Law Commission (ILC) has completed its extensive work with the adoption of draft articles on prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity recommending the elaboration of a Convention on the basis of the draft articles. The draft articles and their commentaries by the ILC have already significantly contributed to the efforts of the international community, as the ILC has had a transparent and open procedure for all interested stakeholders to bolster the criminal justice system. Now it is time for States to continue the work by taking concrete steps.

Estonia continues to firmly support the elaboration of a Convention on crimes against humanity on the basis of the draft articles, as recommended by the ILC, preferably by an international conference of plenipotentiaries. The elaboration of a Convention on the elimination and prevention of crimes against humanity would fill the current gap in the international treaty law and strengthen the international criminal law system alongside the relevant international treaties on genocide and war crimes. A new Convention would complement the Rome Statute and be fully in line with its basic principle of complementarity.

A new Convention would assist, inspire and oblige states to review their national laws and strengthen international cooperation to stand against the most serious international crimes and fight impunity.

Estonia stands ready to contribute constructively to discussions on this very important topic.