

**Statement on behalf of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia by Elvira Cupika-Mavrina,
Legal advisor of Latvia to the United Nations on Crimes against humanity**

New York, 11 October 2023

Mr. Chair,

I have the honor to address the Sixth Committee on behalf of the 3 Baltic countries Estonia, Lithuania and my own country Latvia.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the European Union.

Regrettably, allegations and incidents of crimes against humanity are rising, as well as efforts to bring alleged perpetrators to justice appear to be increasing.

However, unlike the crime of genocide and war crimes, crimes against humanity do not have a dedicated convention. We believe that the existing legal gap isolates victims from receiving justice they deserve.

Convention specifically addressing crimes against humanity is of paramount importance, and it is essential to underscore the gravity of these crimes.

These acts, which include atrocities such as deportation or forcible transfer of population, enslavement, murder, torture, and enforced disappearances, inflict boundless suffering on communities across the globe.

Whenever and wherever crimes against humanity accrue, they strike at the very core of our shared humanity and challenge the principles upon which the United Nations was founded.

We believe that convention on crimes against humanity would provide a clear and internationally recognized legal framework for identifying, prosecuting, and punishing those responsible for these heinous crimes.

Further, convention would prevent individuals from engaging in these atrocities, but most importantly, convention would prioritize the protection of victim's rights and their access to justice.

Moreover, Russia's forced deportation of children from Ukraine and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to the occupied areas and Russia's territory may amount to a crime against humanity.

Lastly, a dedicated convention on crimes against humanity would send a clear message to the world that these crimes are intolerable and will not go unpunished. It would reinforce the commitment of the international community to uphold human dignity, protect the vulnerable, and seek justice for victims of these horrific acts.

I thank you!