



UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

799 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017-3505

Remarks at the 78th General Assembly Sixth Committee Agenda Item 86: Scope and Application of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction

**Elizabeth Grosso
Acting Deputy Legal Adviser
October 12, 2023**

Thank you, Chair.

The United States greatly appreciates the Sixth Committee's continued interest in this agenda item. We thank the Secretary-General for his reports, which have usefully summarized the submissions made by States on this topic.

Recognizing the importance of this issue and its long history as part of international law relating to piracy, the view of the United States continues to be that basic questions remain about how jurisdiction should be exercised in relation to universal crimes and States' views and practices related to the topic.

In that regard, the submissions made by States to date, the continued effort of the Working Group in this Committee, and the Secretary-General's reports have been useful in helping us to identify differences of opinion among States as well as points of consensus on this issue. In the years since this issue was taken up by the Committee, we have engaged in thoughtful discussions on a number of important topics concerning universal jurisdiction, including with respect to its definition, scope, and application. We remain interested in further exploring issues related to the practical application of universal jurisdiction.

The United States continues to analyze the contributions of other States and organizations. In that regard, the United States takes this opportunity to note the recent amendment of the United States' War Crimes Act that expands jurisdiction over the offenses listed in the act to an offender who is present in the United States, regardless of the nationality of the victim or offender.

We welcome this Committee's continued consideration of this issue and the input of more States about their own practices. We look forward to exploring these issues in as practical a manner as possible.

Thank you, Chair.