



**Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste  
to the United Nations in New York**

Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Dionisio Babo Soares  
Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste  
to the United Nations

**Sixth Committee of the 80<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Crimes against humanity (Agenda item 81)**

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*Check against delivery*

Madam/Mr. Chair,  
Thank you for giving me the floor.

Timor-Leste aligns itself with the statement delivered by Guinea-Bissau on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, and by Costa Rica and Portugal on behalf of groups of states, and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

The prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity stand at the very core of our collective responsibility to uphold human dignity, protect vulnerable populations, and safeguard international peace and security. However, more than seventy years after the adoption of the Genocide and Geneva Conventions, there remains no dedicated global treaty specifically addressing crimes against humanity.

This enduring legal gap undermines the coherence of the international legal framework and weakens global efforts to prevent and respond to atrocities. Timor-Leste believes that this gap must finally be closed through the adoption of a comprehensive and universally supported convention.

The consensual adoption of General Assembly resolution 79/122 was a milestone - it reaffirmed our shared resolve to strengthen international criminal law and ensure that perpetrators of heinous crimes face justice, wherever they may be.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

Our Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR), and the first-ever bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission (CTF) between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, stand as testaments to our commitment to peace, justice, and reconciliation. Thousands of testimonies showed that accountability and forgiveness are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary pillars of sustainable peace. They helped uncover the truth, foster reconciliation between communities, and provide a moral and historical foundation for our nation-building process.

Our experience has shown that genuine reconciliation endures only when grounded in truth and justice, not as retribution, but as safeguards against the repetition of suffering. It is from this conviction that Timor-Leste strongly supports the draft articles prepared by the International Law Commission as a balanced basis for negotiating a universal convention.

Such a convention would give effect to the duty of States to prevent, investigate, and redress grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. It would also signal to victims and survivors worldwide that the international community has not forgotten its promises.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

Timor-Leste believes that a future convention must complement, not replicate, the Rome Statute. Its added value should lie in reinforcing national capacities and deepening international cooperation.

In particular, the treaty should include:

- Robust capacity-building measures to support national authorities in investigation and prosecution;
- Technical assistance frameworks to help States strengthen their legal systems; and
- Effective mechanisms for mutual legal assistance and extradition, which are indispensable for small and developing nations.

For many developing, post-conflict, and small island States, such a treaty will provide the legal and institutional framework to incorporate international obligations into domestic law, define jurisdiction clearly, and establish the capacity to bring perpetrators to justice. This is crucial for ensuring that justice begins at home, thereby reducing reliance on international mechanisms.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

The journey to this point has been neither short nor easy. Our discussions reflect diverse legal traditions, historical experiences, and political perspectives. However, it is precisely in this diversity that our collective strength resides.

By bridging differences, through patience, mutual respect, and compromise, we demonstrate what multilateralism can achieve when guided by our shared humanity. For Timor-Leste, this process itself is a powerful sign of hope; a reminder that consensus is possible when the goal is nothing less than the protection of humankind.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

We also attach particular importance to the inclusive participation of civil society, non-governmental organizations, victims' associations, and academia

throughout this process. Their contributions will enrich our work with expertise, transparency, and the lived experiences of affected communities.

Civil society plays a crucial role in early warning, documentation, education, and fostering a culture of accountability. Their active participation is not merely complementary; it is indispensable for effective prevention and meaningful implementation.

Madam/Mr. Chair,

The prevention of crimes against humanity is inseparable from the broader pursuit of justice and the rule of law. For Timor-Leste, these are not abstract ideals, but the very foundations upon which reconciliation and sustainable development are built.

We remain committed to engaging constructively and inclusively in the work ahead. Together, let us craft a universal and forward-looking convention that strengthens international cooperation, honors the dignity of victims, and upholds our collective responsibility to prevent the gravest crimes known to humanity.

Thank you