



Statement

by

Lebanon

**at the
Sixth Committee**

Item 86: "The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction"

New York, October 20, 2015

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***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
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Mr. Chairman,

We thank the Secretary-General for his report on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction, contained in document A/70/125.

My delegation wishes to briefly reiterate the views it has stated in previous years.

Mr. Chairman,

As Lebanon is strongly committed to achieving international justice and putting an end to impunity, it considers universal jurisdiction as an important tool to seek accountability for grave crimes committed under international law. However, it is necessary to ensure that such a principle is not subject to political abuse and is not applied arbitrarily and selectively, but in good faith and in line with due process.

Thus, we wish to stress the following:

- 1) Universal jurisdiction must be exercised in accordance with two provisions of the UN Charter, namely sovereign equality of States and non-interference with internal affairs.

It is worth recalling, in this respect, that States bear primary responsibility to prosecute alleged perpetrators of the most heinous crimes, based on territorial and/or national jurisdiction. Consistent with the principle of complementarity, universal jurisdiction must be exercised only when States are unwilling or unable to prosecute alleged perpetrators of such crimes.

- 2) There is a need to agree upon those most serious crimes that fall under the scope of universal jurisdiction. These grave violations must be clearly defined under international law in order to avoid inconsistencies in the prosecution of alleged perpetrators.

As we stated last year, this problem could be addressed through an international convention that would identify and define the crimes that would fall under the purview of universal jurisdiction.

In concluding Mr. Chairman, we wish to re-affirm our full support to the Working Group on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction and look forward to advancing in our deliberations.

We also echo some of the delegations' suggestion to have the International Law Commission consider this matter.