

**Statement by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of a
Group of States**

**before the Preparatory Committee to prepare for the United Nations Plenipotentiary
Conference for elaboration of a Convention on Crimes against Humanity**

General Statement

19 January 2026-New York

Mr. Chair.

1. I would like to deliver this statement on behalf of China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nicaragua, the Russian Federation, Venezuela and also my own country.
2. We would like to express our gratitude for the efforts made in convening this meeting while assuring you of our active and constructive engagement in this process.

Mr. Chair.

3. Crimes against humanity threaten the peace, and well-being of the societies, unfortunately affecting millions of people including children throughout the recent history. Such egregious crimes that are of most serious concern to the international community as a whole should not go unpunished and the perpetrators of such crimes must not operate with impunity. While there is often common understanding on the gravity of these crimes, the key challenge lies in determining how best to proceed in our discussions to ensure accountability and justice. In our view much depends on genuine international cooperation free from politicization or double standards that should guide both the procedural and substantive work of the Preparatory Committee. That being said, as preliminary remarks on behalf of our group, we would like to touch upon a few procedural and substantive issues.
4. Fighting crimes against humanity which is of serious concern to the international community as a whole requires a solid universal international legal instrument. To that end, the Preparatory Committee, and the Conference need to not just aspire for, but practically take appropriate measures to ensure that the outcome of this process could assure universality of the instrument in question. Past experience has visibly

demonstrated that a favorable environment for elaboration of a convention and constructive engagement of delegations in good faith has led to an outcome that have achieved near universal acceptance. The UNTOC and the UNCAC are among these kind of instruments to which the ILC in has time and again referred or otherwise alluded to in its commentary on the Draft Articles on Crimes against Humanity.

5. The definition of crimes against humanity is central to the ongoing discussions. To achieve universality, we need a definition that incorporate a reasonable and well-defined threshold. We are of firm view that such a threshold is met in the case of unilateral coercive measures. Unilateral coercive measures which are imposed systematically and in a widespread manner, among others, inflict severe conditions of life upon the population, inter alia, the deprivation of access to food and medicine; such unlawful measures could even result in mass deaths and starvation among the population. Thus, the definition of crimes against humanity must include a direct reference to unilateral coercive measures. We will elaborate on this at a later stage.
6. Our group understands that the African Union has taken steps to include slavery, and colonization into the definition of crimes against humanity. We are well-cognizant of the historical background of this issue and that throughout history unfortunately such situation has inflicted irreparable harms to the African people. We follow the developments in this regard and where appropriate will reflect our position on this matter.

Mr. Chair.

7. It is important to combat crimes against humanity without politicization or double standards and with full adherence to the fundamental principles of international law. Otherwise rule of international law could be weakened, not reinforced. In this regard, the draft convention must reaffirm necessity of compliance with the fundamental principles of international law, including sovereign equality of States and its corollary rules and principles such as immunity of officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, non-intervention in domestic affairs of States, throughout efforts in prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity. The future convention must not encourage use of tools or mechanisms prone to politicization and leading to encroach upon functions that are reserved exclusively for the domestic authorities of other States. Similarly, questions of jurisdiction are of essence in our discussion so as to respect sovereignty of States and to prevent jurisdictional conflicts.

8. As to the question on the need for specific provisions on immunity of state officials, our group sees merit in reflecting in the document respective rules of customary international law. In similar vein, we highlight the necessity of considering stipulating respective procedural guarantees, checks and balances.

Mr. Chair.

9. On a procedural note we would like to underline the intergovernmental nature of this process; this fundamental element must be respected at all stages of our work including in addressing the issue of participation of non-governmental organizations. The modalities agreed in this regard in said resolution of the General Assembly must be strictly followed. Along similar lines on procedural matters, we stress the need to support and facilitate the participation of developing Member States in this process, this could be done through a trust fund that the Committee might decide to establish.
10. To conclude, while reserving our right to present further comments or proposals on the topics under consideration of the Preparatory Committee, it is imperative to ensure that any outcome would pave the way for implementation of obligations in good faith, in accordance with international law and not for advancing political agendas nor for perpetuating double standards.
11. We set on an important journey to develop a document dedicated to extremely grave crimes that have already affected millions of people throughout the history. It is necessary to keep this goal in mind aiming for such a draft that will have best chances of becoming a truly universal treaty. To achieve it, adherence to the principle of consensus will be crucial at all stages of our work. Quality should be observed, especially on such a topic; to that end, due regard should be had to dedicating enough time for careful consideration of this highly nuanced work.

I thank you.