

NORDIC GENERAL STATEMENT – PREPARATORY COMMITTEE (JANUARY 2026)

Madame/Mr Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway – and my own country, Sweden.

The Nordic countries warmly welcome the convening of this first session of the Preparatory Committee for a future Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity. Today marks the beginning of a new and long-awaited phase in our collective efforts to close a significant gap in international treaty law and to strengthen accountability for one of the gravest crimes of international concern.

The decision taken by the Sixth Committee to move forward with negotiations was a historic milestone. A dedicated convention will reinforce accountability at the international level, support national implementation, enhance inter-state cooperation, and strengthen our shared ability to prevent and punish crimes against humanity. These crimes continue to cause immense suffering around the world, and impunity remains far too common. We owe it to victims and survivors to ensure that this process leads to a strong, effective and universal convention.

The Nordic countries remain convinced that the draft articles adopted by the International Law Commission provide a solid and balanced basis for negotiations. The discussions held in the Sixth Committee demonstrated broad readiness among states to engage constructively and revealed convergence on many key elements. We look forward to building on that momentum in the work ahead.

Madame/Mr Chair,

As we embark on this preparatory phase, the Nordic countries wish to underline one point of particular importance: **the meaningful participation of civil society**.

Civil society organisations, including survivor groups, human rights defenders, practitioners and academic experts, have played a vital role in advancing accountability for international crimes. Their expertise, field-based knowledge and lived experience are indispensable to ensuring that the future convention is effective, credible and grounded in reality. Inclusive and transparent processes are essential to building trust and legitimacy, and to ensuring that the convention reflects the needs of those it is ultimately intended to protect. The Nordic countries dare to hope that none of us would want to inadvertently exclude survivors of crimes against humanity from the process ahead.

We therefore strongly support the broadest possible participation of civil society throughout the preparatory process and at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries. We encourage the

Preparatory Committee to adopt modalities that facilitate such participation in a meaningful and practical manner.

Madame/Mr Chair,

Our task in the coming years is clear: to lay the foundations for a convention capable of preventing future atrocities and ensuring that crimes against humanity never go unpunished or unaccounted for. The Nordic countries stand ready to work constructively with all delegations to achieve this shared objective.

Thank you.
