



SLOVENIA

**Ms. Petra Langerholc, Minister Plenipotentiary and Legal Adviser at the Permanent
Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations on**

Agenda item 87:!

Scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

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crimes under international law, which should be exercised in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. In our view, the legitimacy and credibility of the use of universal jurisdiction are best ensured by its responsible application in good faith, in a non-abusive and non-selective manner and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Therefore, close cooperation of the States concerned is of paramount importance. It goes without saying, that the judicial proceedings in a universal jurisdiction case must uphold highest judicial standards, such as presence of the accused in proceedings, gathering of evidence, hearings of witnesses etc., in order to enjoy full credibility and legitimacy.

In conclusion, Slovenia would like to highlight the importance of strengthening mutual legal assistance and cooperation between States with a view to improving the effectiveness of the investigation and prosecution of crimes that fall under universal jurisdiction. The exercise of the principle of universal jurisdiction by national courts entails specific challenges, such as witness participation and collection of evidence in the context of inter-state cooperation. Argentina, Belgium, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Senegal, and my country, Slovenia, are actively working towards the adoption of a new international instrument on mutual legal assistance and extradition between states for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, known as the MLA initiative. Seventy-five states from all regions, including states that are not members of the International Criminal Court, support this initiative and my delegation invites all states to join. The diplomatic conference for the adoption of the convention had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak, but a new date will be announced in due course.

Thank you, Mr Chairman