



## United Nations General Assembly | Sixth Committee (item 85)

the Dominican Republic on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and takes this opportunity to make some comments on a national perspective. My delegation also wishes to thank the Secretariat for compiling the information referred to in document A/71/111.

If the universality of the Rome Statute is achieved – and this is a goal we should not spare efforts to achieve –, there would be more fertile ground for values of justice and stability and for an order based on International Law. Discussions on universal jurisdiction would probably lose relevance. Meanwhile, these debates should not deviate us from promoting the Rome Statute system and from the objective we all share: to deny impunity to the perpetrators of serious international crimes.

Mr. Chairman

Universal jurisdiction is one way to achieve accountability and deny impunity to those accused of serious international crimes. We consider the aim of universal jurisdiction to be the prosecution of individuals allegedly responsible for serious crimes defined by international law that, by their gravity, shock the conscience of the whole humanity and violate imperative norms of international law.

The exercise of jurisdiction irrespective of the link between the crime and the prosecuting State is an exception to the more consolidated principles of territoriality and nationality. On the one hand, the principle of sovereign equality reminds us that the exercise of jurisdiction is a primary responsibility of the State concerned. On the other, to put an end to impunity in relation to the most serious crimes is an obligation contained in numerous relevant treaties and is a crucial for ensuring a rule-based international system.

Universal jurisdiction should be exercised only in full respect to international law and is obviously subsidiary to that of states with primary jurisdiction and is limited to specific crimes. The exercise of universal jurisdiction cannot be arbitrary nor should be used for the purposes of fulfilling other interests than those of justice.

Mr. Chairman,

A proper definition of universal jurisdiction and a shared understanding of the scope of its application need to be agreed upon in order to prevent any misapplication or improper resort to universal jurisdiction. and to avoid its selective application.

