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NEW YORK, 9 OCTOBER 2018
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SIXTH COMMITTEE
STATEMENT BY MR. SINA ALAVI, LEGAL ADVISER
THE SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

Mr. Chairman

Progress in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes under international law has been significant in the last decades. But substantial impunity gaps still remain. In this regard, our common goal of ending impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern should govern our discussions on the principle of universal jurisdiction. We welcome the fact that more and more States are recognizing the principle of universal jurisdiction as an effective tool in the fight against impunity. And, we are encouraged that the efforts of a number of national judiciaries to hold those responsible for atrocities to account by invoking universal jurisdiction are bearing fruit.

Mr. Chairman

There is no question that the primary responsibility to prosecute perpetrators

crimes – including in particular genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. As for the scope of universal jurisdiction, we are of the opinion that existing treaty law and customary

acceptance the Syria IIM enjoys in the international community. Mechanisms of this nature can produce paths to accountability, if complemented by prosecutions. And, universal jurisdiction is bound to remain an important tool in this respect.

I thank you.