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Crimes against humanity

Texts and titles of the draft preamble, the draft articles and the draft annex provisionally adopted by the Drafting Committee on first reading

...

Mindful that throughout history millions of children, women and men have been victims of crimes that deeply shock the conscience of humanity,

Recognizing that crimes against humanity threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world,

Recognizing further that the prohibition of crimes against humanity is a peremptory norm of general international law (*jus cogens*),

Affirming that crimes against humanity, which are among the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, must be prevented in conformity with international law,

Determined to put an end to impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes and thus to contribute to the prevention of such crimes,

Recalling the definition of crimes against humanity as set forth in Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Recalling also that it is the duty of every State to exercise its criminal jurisdiction with respect to crimes against humanity,

Considering that, because crimes against humanity must not go unpunished, the effective prosecution of such crimes must be ensured by taking measures at the national level and by enhancing international cooperation, including with respect to extradition and mutual legal assistance,



Considering as well the rights of victims, witnesses and others in relation to crimes against humanity, as well as the right of alleged offenders to fair treatment,

...

Article 1 [1] ¹

Scope

The present draft articles apply to the prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity.

Article 2 [2]

General obligation

Crimes against humanity, whether or not committed in time of armed conflict, are crimes under international law, which States undertake to prevent and punish.

Article 3 [3]

Definition of crimes against humanity

1. For the purpose of the present draft articles, “crime against humanity” means any of the following acts when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack:

- (a) murder;
- (b) extermination;
- (c) enslavement;
- (d) deportation or forcible transfer of population;
- (e) imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law;
- (f) torture;
- (g) rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity;
- (h) persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender as defined in paragraph 3, or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, in connection with any act referred to in this paragraph or in connection with the crime of genocide or war crimes;

¹ The numbers of the draft articles, as previously provisionally adopted by the Commission, are indicated in square brackets.

- (i) enforced disappearance of persons;
- (j) the crime of apartheid;
- (k) other inhumane acts of a similar character intentionally causing great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health.

2. For the purpose of paragraph 1:

(a) “attack directed against any civilian population” means a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts referred to in paragraph 1 against any civilian population, pursuant to or in furtherance of a State or organizational policy to commit such attack;

(b) “extermination” includes the intentional infliction of conditions of life, *inter alia* the deprivation of access to food and medicine, calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population;

(c) “enslavement” means the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children;

(d) “deportation or forcible transfer of population” means forced displacement of the persons concerned by expulsion or other coercive acts from the area in which they are lawfully present, without grounds permitted under international law;

(e) “torture” means the intentional infliction of severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, upon a person in the custody or under the control of the accused, except that torture shall not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions;

(f) “forced pregnancy” means the unlawful confinement of a woman forcibly made pregnant, with the intent of affecting the ethnic composition of any population or carrying out other grave violations of international law. This definition shall not in any way be interpreted as affecting national laws relating to pregnancy;

(g) “persecution” means the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights contrary to international law by reason of the identity of the group or collectivity;

(h) “the crime of apartheid” means inhumane acts of a character similar to those referred to in paragraph 1, committed in the context of an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime;

(i) “enforced disappearance of persons” means the arrest, detention or abduction of persons by, or with the authorization, support or acquiescence of, a State or a political organization, followed by a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the fate or whereabouts of

those persons, with the intention of removing them from the protection of the law for a prolonged period of time.

3. For the purpose of the present draft articles, it is understood that the term “gender” refers to the two sexes, male and female, within the context of society. The term “gender” does not indicate any meaning different from the above.

4. This draft article is without prejudice to any broader definition provided for in any international instrument or national law.

Article 4 [4]

Obligation of prevention

1. Each State undertakes to prevent crimes against humanity, in conformity with international law, including through:

(a) effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other preventive measures in any territory under its jurisdiction; and

(b) cooperation with other States, relevant intergovernmental organizations, and, as appropriate, other organizations.

2. No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, such as armed conflict, internal political instability or other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of crimes against humanity.

Article 5

Non-refoulement

1. No State shall expel, return (*refouler*), surrender or extradite a person to territory under the jurisdiction of another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would be in danger of being subjected to a crime against humanity.

2. For the purpose of determining whether there are such grounds, the competent authorities shall take into account all relevant considerations, including, where applicable, the existence in the territory under the jurisdiction of the State concerned of a consistent pattern of gross, flagrant or mass violations of human rights or of serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Article 6 [5]

Criminalization under national law

1. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that crimes against humanity constitute offences under its criminal law.

2. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the following acts are offences under its criminal law:

- (a) committing a crime against humanity;
- (b) attempting to commit such a crime; and
- (c) ordering, soliciting, inducing, aiding, abetting or otherwise assisting in or contributing to the commission or attempted commission of such a crime.

3. Each State shall also take the necessary measures to ensure that the following are offences under its criminal law:

(a) a military commander or person effectively acting as a military commander shall be criminally responsible for crimes against humanity committed by forces under his or her effective command and control, or effective authority and control as the case may be, as a result of his or her failure to exercise control properly over such forces, where:

- (i) that military commander or person either knew or, owing to the circumstances at the time, should have known that the forces were committing or about to commit such crimes; and
- (ii) that military commander or person failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his or her power to prevent or repress their commission or to submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

(b) With respect to superior and subordinate relationships not described in subparagraph (a), a superior shall be criminally responsible for crimes against humanity committed by subordinates under his or her effective authority and control, as a result of his or her failure to exercise control properly over such subordinates, where:

- (i) the superior either knew, or consciously disregarded information which clearly indicated, that the subordinates were committing or about to commit such crimes;
- (ii) the crimes concerned activities that were within the effective responsibility and control of the superior; and
- (iii) the superior failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his or her power to prevent or repress their commission or to submit the matter to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

4. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that, under its criminal law, the fact that an offence referred to in this draft article was committed pursuant to an order of a Government or of a superior, whether military or civilian, is not a ground for excluding criminal responsibility of a subordinate.

5. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that, under its criminal law, the offences referred to in this draft article shall not be subject to any statute of limitations.

6. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that, under its criminal law, the offences referred to in this draft article shall be punishable by appropriate penalties that take into account their grave nature.

7. Subject to the provisions of its national law, each State shall take measures, where appropriate, to establish the liability of legal persons for the offences referred to in this draft article. Subject to the legal principles of the State, such liability of legal persons may be criminal, civil or administrative.

Article 7 [6]

Establishment of national jurisdiction

1. Each State shall take the necessary measures to establish its jurisdiction over the offences covered by the present draft articles in the following cases:

(a) when the offence is committed in any territory under its jurisdiction or on board a ship or aircraft registered in that State;

(b) when the alleged offender is a national of that State or, if that State considers it appropriate, a stateless person who is habitually resident in that State's territory;

(c) when the victim is a national of that State if that State considers it appropriate.

2. Each State shall also take the necessary measures to establish its jurisdiction over the offences covered by the present draft articles in cases where the alleged offender is present in any territory under its jurisdiction and it does not extradite or surrender the person in accordance with the present draft articles.

3. The present draft articles do not exclude the exercise of any criminal jurisdiction established by a State in accordance with its national law.

Article 8 [7]

Investigation

Each State shall ensure that its competent authorities proceed to a prompt and impartial investigation whenever there is reasonable ground to believe that acts constituting crimes against humanity have been or are being committed in any territory under its jurisdiction.

Article 9 [8]

Preliminary measures when an alleged offender is present

1. Upon being satisfied, after an examination of information available to it, that the circumstances so warrant, any State in the territory under whose jurisdiction a person alleged to have committed any offence covered by the present draft articles is present shall take the person into custody or take other legal measures to ensure his or her presence. The custody and other legal measures shall be as provided in the law of that State, but may be continued only for such time as is necessary to enable any criminal, extradition or surrender proceedings to be instituted.

2. Such State shall immediately make a preliminary inquiry into the facts.
3. When a State, pursuant to this draft article, has taken a person into custody, it shall immediately notify the States referred to in draft article 7, paragraph 1, of the fact that such person is in custody and of the circumstances which warrant his or her detention. The State which makes the preliminary inquiry contemplated in paragraph 2 of this draft article shall promptly report its findings to the said States and shall indicate whether it intends to exercise jurisdiction.

Article 10 [9]

Aut dedere aut judicare

The State in the territory under whose jurisdiction the alleged offender is present shall submit the case to its competent authorities for the purpose of prosecution, unless it extradites or surrenders the person to another State or competent international criminal tribunal. Those authorities shall take their decision in the same manner as in the case of any other offence of a grave nature under the law of that State.

Article 11 [10]

Fair treatment of the alleged offender

1. Any person against whom measures are being taken in connection with an offence covered by the present draft articles shall be guaranteed at all stages of the proceedings fair treatment, including a fair trial, and full protection of his or her rights under applicable national and international law, including human rights law.
2. Any such person who is in prison, custody or detention in a State that is not of his or her nationality shall be entitled:
 - (a) to communicate without delay with the nearest appropriate representative of the State or States of which such person is a national or which is otherwise entitled to protect that person's rights or, if such person is a stateless person, of the State which, at that person's request, is willing to protect that person's rights;
 - (b) to be visited by a representative of that State or those States; and
 - (c) to be informed without delay of his or her rights under this paragraph.
3. The rights referred to in paragraph 2 shall be exercised in conformity with the laws and regulations of the State in the territory under whose jurisdiction the person is present, subject to the proviso that the said laws and regulations must enable full effect to be given to the purpose for which the rights accorded under paragraph 2 are intended.

Article 12

Victims, witnesses and others

1. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that:

(a) any person who alleges that acts constituting crimes against humanity have been or are being committed has the right to complain to the competent authorities; and

(b) complainants, victims, witnesses, and their relatives and representatives, as well as other persons participating in any investigation, prosecution, extradition or other proceeding within the scope of the present draft articles, shall be protected against ill-treatment or intimidation as a consequence of any complaint, information, testimony or other evidence given. Protective measures shall be without prejudice to the rights of the alleged offender referred to in draft article 11.

2. Each State shall, in accordance with its national law, enable the views and concerns of victims of a crime against humanity to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of criminal proceedings against alleged offenders in a manner not prejudicial to the rights referred to in draft article 11.

3. Each State shall take the necessary measures to ensure in its legal system that the victims of a crime against humanity have the right to obtain reparation for material and moral damages, on an individual or collective basis, consisting, as appropriate, of one or more of the following or other forms: restitution; compensation; satisfaction; rehabilitation; cessation and guarantees of non-repetition.

Article 13

Extradition

1. Each of the offences covered by the present draft articles shall be deemed to be included as an extraditable offence in any extradition treaty existing between States. States undertake to include such offences as extraditable offences in every extradition treaty to be concluded between them.

2. For the purposes of extradition between States, an offence covered by the present draft articles shall not be regarded as a political offence or as an offence connected with a political offence or as an offence inspired by political motives. Accordingly, a request for extradition based on such an offence may not be refused on these grounds alone.

3. If a State that makes extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty receives a request for extradition from another State with which it has no extradition treaty, it may consider the present draft articles as the legal basis for extradition in respect of any offence covered by the present draft articles.

4. A State that makes extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty shall, for any offence covered by the present draft articles:

(a) inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations whether it will use the present draft articles as the legal basis for cooperation on extradition with other States; and

(b) if it does not use the present draft articles as the legal basis for cooperation on extradition, seek, where appropriate, to conclude treaties on extradition with other States in order to implement this draft article.

5. States that do not make extradition conditional on the existence of a treaty shall recognize the offences covered by the present draft articles as extraditable offences between themselves.

6. Extradition shall be subject to the conditions provided for by the national law of the requested State or by applicable extradition treaties, including the grounds upon which the requested State may refuse extradition.

7. If necessary, the offences covered by the present draft articles shall be treated, for the purposes of extradition between States, as if they had been committed not only in the place in which they occurred but also in the territory of the States that have established jurisdiction in accordance with draft article 7, paragraph 1.

8. If extradition, sought for purposes of enforcing a sentence, is refused because the person sought is a national of the requested State, the requested State shall, if its national law so permits and in conformity with the requirements of such law, upon application of the requesting State, consider the enforcement of the sentence imposed under the national law of the requesting State or the remainder thereof.

9. Nothing in the present draft articles shall be interpreted as imposing an obligation to extradite if the requested State has substantial grounds for believing that the request has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of that person's gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, culture, membership of a particular social group, political opinions or other grounds that are universally recognized as impermissible under international law, or that compliance with the request would cause prejudice to that person's position for any of these reasons.

10. Before refusing extradition, the requested State shall, where appropriate, consult with the requesting State to provide it with ample opportunity to present its opinions and to provide information relevant to its allegation.

Article 14

Mutual legal assistance

1. States shall afford one another the widest measure of mutual legal assistance in investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings in relation to the offences covered by the present draft articles in accordance with this draft article.

2. Mutual legal assistance shall be afforded to the fullest extent possible under relevant laws, treaties, agreements and arrangements of the requested State with respect to investigations, prosecutions, judicial and other proceedings in relation to

the offences for which a legal person may be held liable in accordance with draft article 6, paragraph 7, in the requesting State.

3. Mutual legal assistance to be afforded in accordance with this draft article may be requested for any of the following purposes:

(a) identifying and locating alleged offenders and, as appropriate, victims, witnesses or others;

(b) taking evidence or statements from persons, including by videoconference;

(c) effecting service of judicial documents;

(d) executing searches and seizures;

(e) examining objects and sites, including obtaining forensic evidence;

(f) providing information, evidentiary items and expert evaluations;

(g) providing originals or certified copies of relevant documents and records;

(h) identifying, tracing or freezing proceeds of crime, property, instrumentalities or other things for evidentiary or other purposes;

(i) facilitating the voluntary appearance of persons in the requesting State; or

(j) any other type of assistance that is not contrary to the national law of the requested State.

4. States shall not decline to render mutual legal assistance pursuant to this draft article on the ground of bank secrecy.

5. States shall consider, as may be necessary, the possibility of concluding bilateral or multilateral agreements or arrangements that would serve the purposes of, give practical effect to, or enhance the provisions of this draft article.

6. Without prejudice to its national law, the competent authorities of a State may, without prior request, transmit information relating to crimes against humanity to a competent authority in another State where they believe that such information could assist the authority in undertaking or successfully concluding investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings or could result in a request formulated by the latter State pursuant to the present draft articles.

7. The provisions of this draft article shall not affect the obligations under any other treaty, bilateral or multilateral, that governs or will govern, in whole or in part,

mutual legal assistance, except that the provisions of this draft article shall apply to the extent that they provide for greater mutual legal assistance.

8. The draft annex to the present draft articles shall apply to requests made pursuant to this draft article if the States in question are not bound by a treaty of mutual legal assistance. If those States are bound by such a treaty, the corresponding provisions of that treaty shall apply, unless the States agree to apply the provisions of the draft annex in lieu thereof. States are encouraged to apply the draft annex if it facilitates cooperation.

Article 15

Settlement of disputes

1. States shall endeavour to settle disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the present draft articles through negotiations.

2. Any dispute between two or more States concerning the interpretation or application of the present draft articles that is not settled through negotiation shall, at the request of one of those States, be submitted to the International Court of Justice, unless those States agree to submit the dispute to arbitration.

3. Each State may declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 2 of this draft article. The other States shall not be bound by paragraph 2 of this draft article with respect to any State that has made such a declaration.

4. Any State that has made a declaration in accordance with paragraph 3 of this draft article may at any time withdraw that declaration.

Annex

1. This draft annex applies in accordance with draft article 14, paragraph 8.

Designation of a central authority

2. Each State shall designate a central authority that shall have the responsibility and power to receive requests for mutual legal assistance and either to execute them or to transmit them to the competent authorities for execution. Where a State has a special region or territory with a separate system of mutual legal assistance, it may designate a distinct central authority that shall have the same function for that region or territory. Central authorities shall ensure the speedy and proper execution or transmission of the requests received. Where the central authority transmits the request to a competent authority for execution, it shall encourage the speedy and proper execution of the request by the competent authority. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be notified by each State of the central authority designated for this purpose. Requests for mutual legal assistance and any communication

related thereto shall be transmitted to the central authorities designated by the States. This requirement shall be without prejudice to the right of a State to require that such requests and communications be addressed to it through diplomatic channels and, in urgent circumstances, where the States agree, through the International Criminal Police Organization, if possible.

Procedures for making a request

3. Requests shall be made in writing or, where possible, by any means capable of producing a written record, in a language acceptable to the requested State, under conditions allowing that State to establish authenticity. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be notified by each State of the language or languages acceptable to that State. In urgent circumstances and where agreed by the States, requests may be made orally, but shall be confirmed in writing forthwith.

4. A request for mutual legal assistance shall contain:

(a) the identity of the authority making the request;

(b) the subject matter and nature of the investigation, prosecution or judicial proceeding to which the request relates and the name and functions of the authority conducting the investigation, prosecution or judicial proceeding;

(c) a summary of the relevant facts, except in relation to requests for the purpose of service of judicial documents;

(d) a description of the assistance sought and details of any particular procedure that the requesting State wishes to be followed;

(e) where possible, the identity, location and nationality of any person concerned; and

(f) the purpose for which the evidence, information or action is sought.

5. The requested State may request additional information when it appears necessary for the execution of the request in accordance with its national law or when it can facilitate such execution.

Response to the request by the requested State

6. A request shall be executed in accordance with the national law of the requested State and, to the extent not contrary to the national law of the requested State and where possible, in accordance with the procedures specified in the request.

7. The requested State shall execute the request for mutual legal assistance as soon as possible and shall take as full account as possible of any deadlines suggested by the requesting State and for which reasons are given, preferably in the request.

The requested State shall respond to reasonable requests by the requesting State on progress of its handling of the request. The requesting State shall promptly inform the requested State when the assistance sought is no longer required.

8. Mutual legal assistance may be refused:

(a) if the request is not made in conformity with the provisions of this draft annex;

(b) if the requested State considers that execution of the request is likely to prejudice its sovereignty, security, *ordre public* or other essential interests;

(c) if the authorities of the requested State would be prohibited by its national law from carrying out the action requested with regard to any similar offence, had it been subject to investigation, prosecution or judicial proceedings under their own jurisdiction;

(d) if it would be contrary to the legal system of the requested State relating to mutual legal assistance for the request to be granted.

9. Reasons shall be given for any refusal of mutual legal assistance.

10. Mutual legal assistance may be postponed by the requested State on the ground that it interferes with an ongoing investigation, prosecution or judicial proceeding.

11. Before refusing a request pursuant to paragraph 8 of this draft annex or postponing its execution pursuant to paragraph 10 of this draft annex, the requested State shall consult with the requesting State to consider whether assistance may be granted subject to such terms and conditions as it deems necessary. If the requesting State accepts assistance subject to those conditions, it shall comply with the conditions.

12. The requested State:

(a) shall provide to the requesting State copies of government records, documents or information in its possession that under its national law are available to the general public; and

(b) may, at its discretion, provide to the requesting State in whole, in part or subject to such conditions as it deems appropriate, copies of any government records, documents or information in its possession that under its national law are not available to the general public.

Use of information by the requesting State

13. The requesting State shall not transmit or use information or evidence furnished by the requested State for investigations, prosecutions or judicial proceedings other than those stated in the request without the prior consent of the requested State. Nothing in this paragraph shall prevent the requesting State from disclosing in its proceedings information or evidence that is exculpatory to an accused person. In the latter case, the requesting State shall notify the requested State prior to the disclosure and, if so requested, consult with the requested State. If, in an exceptional case, advance notice is not possible, the requesting State shall inform the requested State of the disclosure without delay.

14. The requesting State may require that the requested State keep confidential the fact and substance of the request, except to the extent necessary to execute the request. If the requested State cannot comply with the requirement of confidentiality, it shall promptly inform the requesting State.

Testimony of person from the requested State

15. Without prejudice to the application of paragraph 19 of this draft annex, a witness, expert or other person who, at the request of the requesting State, consents to give evidence in a proceeding or to assist in an investigation, prosecution or judicial proceeding in territory under the jurisdiction of the requesting State shall not be prosecuted, detained, punished or subjected to any other restriction of his or her personal liberty in that territory in respect of acts, omissions or convictions prior to his or her departure from territory under the jurisdiction of the requested State. Such safe conduct shall cease when the witness, expert or other person having had, for a period of fifteen consecutive days or for any period agreed upon by the States from the date on which he or she has been officially informed that his or her presence is no longer required by the judicial authorities, an opportunity of leaving, has nevertheless remained voluntarily in territory under the jurisdiction of the requesting State or, having left it, has returned of his or her own free will.

16. Wherever possible and consistent with fundamental principles of national law, when an individual is in territory under the jurisdiction of a State and has to be heard as a witness or expert by the judicial authorities of another State, the first State may, at the request of the other, permit the hearing to take place by video conference if it is not possible or desirable for the individual in question to appear in person in territory under the jurisdiction of the requesting State. States may agree that the hearing shall be conducted by a judicial authority of the requesting State and attended by a judicial authority of the requested State.

Transfer for testimony of person detained in the requested State

17. A person who is being detained or is serving a sentence in the territory under the jurisdiction of one State whose presence in another State is requested for purposes of identification, testimony or otherwise providing assistance in obtaining evidence for investigations, prosecutions or judicial proceedings in relation to

offences covered by the present draft articles, may be transferred if the following conditions are met:

- (a) the person freely gives his or her informed consent; and
- (b) the competent authorities of both States agree, subject to such conditions as those States may deem appropriate.

18. For the purposes of paragraph 17 of this draft annex:

(a) the State to which the person is transferred shall have the authority and obligation to keep the person transferred in custody, unless otherwise requested or authorized by the State from which the person was transferred;

(b) the State to which the person is transferred shall without delay implement its obligation to return the person to the custody of the State from which the person was transferred as agreed beforehand, or as otherwise agreed, by the competent authorities of both States;

(c) the State to which the person is transferred shall not require the State from which the person was transferred to initiate extradition proceedings for the return of the person; and

(d) the person transferred shall receive credit for service of the sentence being served from the State from which he or she was transferred for time spent in the custody of the State to which he or she was transferred.

19. Unless the State from which a person is to be transferred in accordance with paragraphs 17 and 18 of this draft annex so agrees, that person, whatever his or her nationality, shall not be prosecuted, detained, punished or subjected to any other restriction of his or her personal liberty in territory under the jurisdiction of the State to which that person is transferred in respect of acts, omissions or convictions prior to his or her departure from territory under the jurisdiction of the State from which he or she was transferred.

Costs

20. The ordinary costs of executing a request shall be borne by the requested State, unless otherwise agreed by the States concerned. If expenses of a substantial or extraordinary nature are or will be required to fulfil the request, the States shall consult to determine the terms and conditions under which the request will be executed, as well as the manner in which the costs shall be borne.