



**United Kingdom Mission
to the United Nations**

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Mr, Chairman,

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland considers that the term universal jurisdiction properly refers to national jurisdiction established over a crime irrespective of the place of perpetration, the nationality of the suspect or the victim or other links between the crime and the prosecuting State. The main rationale for universal jurisdiction is that the most serious international crimes affect the international legal order as a whole and that all States should therefore be able to prosecute such crimes.

The United Kingdom believes it important to distinguish universal jurisdiction from certain other types of jurisdiction:

- Firstly, from the jurisdiction of international judicial mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court;
- Secondly, from jurisdiction established under treaties which provide for an extradite or prosecute regime, although some States, including the United Kingdom, may establish universal jurisdiction at the domestic

established under customary international law as crimes of universal jurisdiction, and whether there are conditions for the exercise of such jurisdiction.

The United Kingdom legal system is built on the tradition that, as a general rule, the authorities of the State in whose territory an offence is committed are best placed to prosecute the crime, in particular because of the availability of evidence and witnesses, and the visibility of justice for victims. However, the exercise of territorial jurisdiction is not always possible. In such cases, while it will not be an option of first resort (as illustrated by the very limited examples of its exercise in practice), universal jurisdiction can be a necessary and important tool to ensure that the perpetrators of serious crimes do not escape justice.

Where universal jurisdiction is exercised or indeed, in other cases where there may be competing jurisdictional claims the United Kingdom considers that it is advisable that safegu()8(p 3Tm[i]12(n)-3(d) wo)terpesaf(p)-3(r)-4(c(s)m[c(e)-3(rr)6o(x)