

Sixth Committee – Agenda item 84
The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

Statement by the Federal Republic of Germany
12 October 2023

In 2002, the German Code of Crimes against International Law (CCAIL - *Völkerstrafgesetzbuch - VStGB*) came into force. It allows German authorities to prosecute mainly persons in respect of international criminal law who have committed serious crimes with the concept of universal jurisdiction, and war crimes in particular (Weltrechtsprinzip). While the world has not been able to prosecute serious crimes such as those committed by the ICC if the conditions set forth in the Code of Crimes against International Law and the principle of universal jurisdiction ensure that all potential loopholes are closed when it comes to holding perpetrators accountable.

proceedings concerning international trials. Regarding procedural aspects, the paper proposes a number of measures for victims in court, such as simplified, providing courtroom interpretations for foreign media, ensuring legal and psychological support for victims and allowing them to participate in trials as complainants. Where it comes to reforming material aspects, the paper foresees changes in the crimes of sexualized war in order to further align the CCAIL with the Rome Statute.

Germany is holding perpetrators liable for serious crimes. Since the law came into force, it has led to several trials and convictions related to members of terrorist organizations in particular Da'esh who have returned to Germany. Prosecuting terrorism-related offences is a key element of Germany's criminal responsibility of perpetrators and results in high conviction rates.

and his wife, a German national, had abused a Yazidi woman and her daughter as slaves.

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Yazidi women were also used for sexual slavery and forced marriage. In this case, the court found this first-ever conviction of an ISIS member, pointing out that “[t]he defendant’s actions

[REDACTED] actions.

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