The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2019

[on the report of the Sixth Committee (A/74/430)]

74/192. The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, to international law and to an international order based on the rule of law, which is essential for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among States,


Taking into account the comments and observations of Governments and observers and the discussions held in the Sixth Committee at the sixty-fourth to seventy-fourth sessions of the General Assembly on the scope and application of universal jurisdiction,1

Noting the constructive dialogue in the Sixth Committee, including in the context of its working group, recognizing the diversity of views expressed by States, including concerns expressed in relation to the abuse or misuse of the principle of universal jurisdiction, and acknowledging, in order to make progress, the need for

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continuing discussions on the scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction in the Sixth Committee,

Reiterating its commitment to fighting impunity, and noting the views expressed by States that the legitimacy and credibility of the use of universal jurisdiction are best ensured by its responsible and judicious application consistent with international law,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General prepared on the basis of comments and observations of Governments and relevant observers;²

2. Decides that the Sixth Committee shall continue its consideration of the scope and application of universal jurisdiction, without prejudice to the consideration of this topic and related issues in other forums of the United Nations, and for this purpose decides to establish, at its seventy-fifth session, a working group of the Sixth Committee to continue to undertake a thorough discussion of the scope and application of universal jurisdiction;

3. Invites Member States and relevant observers to the General Assembly, as appropriate, to submit, before 24 April 2020, information and observations on the scope and application of universal jurisdiction, including, where appropriate, information on the relevant applicable international treaties and on their national legal rules and judicial practice, and requests the Secretary-General to prepare and submit to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session a report based on such information and observations;

4. Decides that the working group shall be open to all Member States and that relevant observers to the General Assembly will be invited to participate in the work of the working group;

5. Also decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fifth session the item entitled “The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction”.

51st plenary meeting 18 December 2019