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UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement of the United States of America

United Nations General Assembly - 67th Session Sixth Committee
The Scope and Application of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction
Agenda Item 84

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We greatly appreciate the Sixth Committee's continued interest in this important item.
We thank the Secretary-General for his reports, which have usefully summarized the submissions made by States on this topic.

Despite the importance of this issue and its long history as part of international law
relating to piracy, basic questions remain about how jurisdiction should be exercised in relation to universal crimes and States' views and practices related to the topic. The submissions made by States to date, the work of the Working Group in this Committee, and the Secretary-General's reports on the issue are extremely useful in helping us to identify differences of opinion among States as well as points of consensus on this issue.

The work undertaken by this committee so far has highlighted numerous issues
associated with universal jurisdiction, including the definition of what is meant by "universal jurisdiction," the appropriate scope of the principle, its relationship to treaty-based obligations and to the law of immunity, and the need to ensure that decisions to invoke such a principle are undertaken in an appropriate manner, including in cases where there are other States that may exercise jurisdiction.

Questions about the practical application of universal jurisdiction also merit further examination, such as the circumstances under which and how often it is invoked, whether