

79th Session of the General Assembly
Sixth Committee, The scope and application of the principle of universal jurisdiction
Statement by the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka,
H.E. Ambassador Mohan Pieris
16th October 2024

Chairman,

Traditionally, in domestic law, criminal prosecutions have been regarded as a tool capable of contributing to peaceful governance. Under international law, however, recourse to criminal prosecutions as a safeguard for maintaining international peace and security is very recent and still limited, and in many respects, disputed. This is the case both in international rules intended to be applied by international jurisdictions and when they are directed at soliciting the exercise of criminal prosecutions by domestic courts.

However, we know that the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court expressly provides that the jurisdiction of the Court shall be limited to the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, identifying these crimes as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression. The ICC statute ends at the complete codification of the crimes that deserve to be submitted to an international jurisdiction. The scope of jurisdiction, Mr. Chairman, is not uniform and may vary according to the exigencies of each situation.

You will appreciate that states have a primary responsibility to protect their own

