

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON UNIVERSAL JURISDICTION

Dissemination of the Madrid-Buenos Aires Principles on Universal Jurisdiction

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Dissemination of the Madrid-Buenos Aires Principles on Universal Jurisdiction

Baltasar Garzón International Foundation (FIBGAR) is a private, social, non-profit foundation, deeply committed to the defense and promotion of Human Rights and Universal Jurisdiction. Although FIBGAR is located in Spain, Colombia, Argentina and Mexico, its global vocation encourages us to design and implement projects with a wider scope.

Preamble

In recent decades, Universal Jurisdiction has shown itself to be a necessary instrument for ensuring a fully and completely satisfactory judicial response to international crimes. From the precursors of International Law to the present day, the international community has consolidated the idea that the nature and seriousness of certain crimes transcends the responsibility of a particular Sovereign State and affects humanity as a whole. This makes all States responsible for identifying and pursuing those crimes to prevent a situation of impunity for the perpetrators.

International Criminal Law has developed considerably from the establishment of the Courts of Nuremberg and Tokyo to the creation of *ad hoc* tribunals. However, the approval of the Rome Statute and its review in the Conference of Kampala constitute some of the most important advances in International Law, through the establishment of the International Criminal Court. By offering a rational, measured response to criminal offences, it has led to progress in protecting victims and in confronting impunity. Nonetheless, the response is still incomplete because of the many limitations of the International Criminal Court. Therefore its function needs to be strengthened at a local level by applying the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, which is already recognised in various international instruments and state legislations as an appropriate mechanism for enforcing the actions of international justice in the national sphere.

The application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction by legal practitioners and its inclusion in national legislations over the past few decades invites us to analyse and reflect on its achievements, failures and challenges. The Principles of Princeton and those of Cairo-Arusha made great efforts to define the main lines of Universal Jurisdiction. However, years after their publication, the application of this principle has undergone new developments, advances, corrections and

limitations in various countries, in many cases increasing the lack of protection. It is therefore vital that these principles be brought up to date and broadened, spread and promoted on a political level.

Some of the crimes included in this declaration are already punished in accordance with the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction, while others, such as those included in Principle 3, have been defined and their punishment is considered an aspiration to ensure the full protection and survival of humanity in the face of major economic, financial and environmental aggressions.

Consequently, the underlying aim of these principles and their annex is rooted in three objectives: 1) to reaffirm the doctrinal efforts made thus far, 2) to promote the codification of those elements around which there is consensus, and 3) to report new sources of impunity and the means to prevent it in order to establish an *opinio iuris* to consolidate Universal Jurisdiction as an effective instrument in eradicating impunity and protecting the victims and the ecosystem.

Here it is the Preamble of the **Madrid-Buenos Aires Principles of Universal Jurisdiction** which was presented to the public on September 10th of 2015 in the Second International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction in the capital of Argentina.

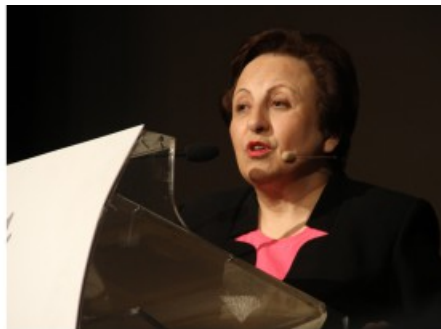
It implied a milestone in a major project which, despite being born in February 2014, it has just started. The objectives can be summarized as:

- ➔ To analyze new sources of impunity, as the resulting ones from economic and environmental crimes.
- ➔ To promote the use of Universal Jurisdiction as a useful tool to fight for justice.
- ➔ To gather opinions from experts from all over the world and to base legal arguments on the new principles of universal jurisdiction.
- ➔ To spread the Madrid- Buenos Aires Principles in order to settle an *opinio iuris* in order to encourage a comprehensive protection of victims through Universal Jurisdiction.

This project has already completed the following phases:

Phase I- First International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction in Madrid

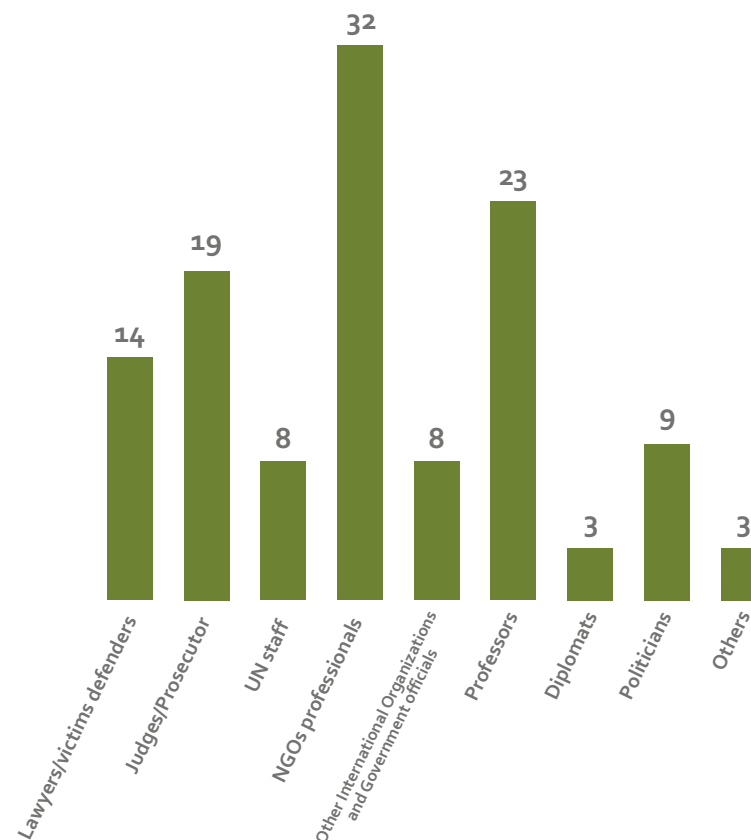
During May 20 to 23 of 2014, FIBGAR organized the **First International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction in Madrid**, widely regarded as a great success in attendance and impact. During four days, experts from ten different countries discussed the past, present and future of Universal Jurisdiction all over the world. On the last day of the conference, the draft of the Madrid-Buenos Aires Principles of Universal Jurisdiction was presented, which would be discussed in subsequent phases.



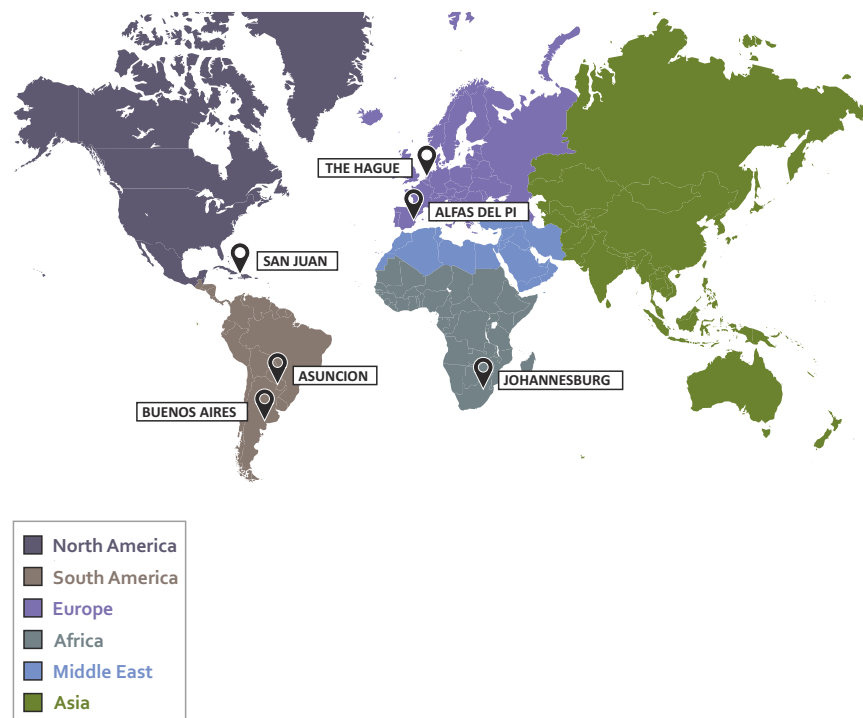
Phase II - Regional Working Groups

To achieve the objective of collecting regional perspectives, FIBGAR has organized **6 Regional Working Groups**: groups composed of 10 to 15 experts who represent diverse geographical areas as a reflection of different legal origins and political contexts.

The objective was to prepare two workdays in which all their comments, proposals, amendments and modifications were collected.



- Puerto Rico (Central America, North America and Caribbean countries)
- Asuncion (Latin America)
- Spain (Europe I)
- The Hague (Europe II)
- Johannesburg (Africa)
- Buenos Aires (Final Working Group)



THERE IS NO JUSTICE WITHOUT EQUITY,
NO EQUITY WITHOUT DEVELOPMENT,
NO DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DEMOCRACY,
NO DEMOCRACY WITHOUT RESPECT
TO THE IDENTITY AND DIGNITY OF CULTURES
AND PEOPLES.

RIGOBERTA MENCHÚ



Phase III - Second International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction in Buenos Aires

On September 9th and 10th of 2015 the Second International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina. 35 experts from more than 15 nationalities participated. On the last workday the final version of the Madrid-Buenos Aires new Principles of Universal Jurisdiction was presented.

What are the innovations of the Madrid- Buenos Aires Principles of Universal Jurisdiction?

- Universal prosecution of economic and environmental crimes.
- Acknowledgement of criminal liability of legal persons.
- Promotion of Civil Universal Jurisdiction.
- Explanation and clarification of the relation between the International Criminal Court and the Universal Jurisdiction.
- Strengthening of international judicial mutual cooperation.
- Special protection of victims and witness.
- Balance between Universal Jurisdiction and the processes of transnational justice.

New phase (IV): Dissemination of the Madrid-Buenos Aires Principles of Universal Jurisdiction

Now FIBGAR is designing new working lines on the dissemination and promotion of universal jurisdiction. In this context, it is working on the organization of Regional Disseminating Working Groups.

Following an updated model of the Phase II Working Groups, in this new stage FIBGAR would like to invite experts to be part of the Disseminating Groups in a two-day event. During the first work-day the experts will take a close look at the content of the text and will discuss it. On the second work-day new principles will be presented to the public following the symposium method, composed by different conference-groups, carried out by the participants of the Disseminating Working Group.

Each Disseminating Working Group will be composed of 10 to 15 members, coming from different professional areas: jurists, judges, public prosecutors, lawyers, NGO professionals, members of international organizations, diplomats as well as professors from International Law, International Criminal Law and Human Rights Law.

A member of FIBGAR will moderate the Disseminating Working Group meetings and will be responsible for accomplishing the agenda prepared by the assistants. All the meetings will be recorded and the report of the working group will be published by FIBGAR, including on its website.

Funding sources

The aim of FIBGAR is to settle the basis for a multilateral cooperation in every level. In this sense, it is crucial to join together our forces to achieve the maximum participation, dissemination and impact as possible. It is important to obtain the cooperation of local institutions and hosting regions, so each organisation can collaborate by sending their own experts.

In order to get a satisfactory result, FIBGAR is looking for partners on the field, funding sources and the best experts. Now FIBGAR is establishing and strengthening relations with other organizations in order to find partners for funding, which would have to cover necessary costs, such as the rent of meeting rooms for the experts, costs related to transportation, accommodation and other justified costs for all the experts and FIBGAR's staff.

More information:

FIBGAR official website:

<http://en.fibgar.org/>

First International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction website:

<http://www.fibgar.org/congreso-jurisdiccion-universal/english/index.html>

Videos of the speakers' lectures in the Congress (in English):

<http://www.fibgar.org/congreso-jurisdiccion-universal/english/ponencias.html>

Second International Congress on Universal Jurisdiction website:

<http://principiosju.org/index.php>

Videos of the speakers' lectures in the Second Congress:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7w5uYqVbT8w

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=crfWQTz6g_k

Participating experts on different phases

The experts here participated in different phases of the project contributing with comments and proposals. The final content of the Principles it is not attributable to any of the participants individually.



Baltasar Garzón Real,
judge and president of FIBGAR



Rigoberta Menchú Tum,
Nobel Peace Prize



Shirin Ebadi,
Nobel Peace Prize and lawyer



Héctor Sejenovich,
Nobel Peace Prize - shared with
the Intergovernmental Panel on
Climate Change



Raúl Zaffaroni,
judge at the Supreme
Court of Argentina



Benjamín B. Ferencz,
former Chief Prosecutor for
the US at the Nuremberg
war crimes trials

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Luis Moreno Ocampo,
former ICC General Prosecutor



Shadrack Gutto,
professor at the University
of South Africa



Yasmin Sooka,
executive director of
Foundation for Human
Rights in South Africa



Sètondji Roland Adjovi,
member of the UN Working
Group on Arbitrary Detention



Luciano Hazán,
member of the UN Committee
on Enforced Disappearances



Paulo Abrão,
national secretary of the
Ministry of Justice of Brazil



Frank La Rue,
former Special Rapporteur
on the promotion and protection
of the right to freedom of
opinion and expression



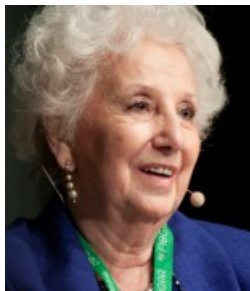
Juan E. Méndez,
Special Rapporteur on torture
and other cruel, inhuman or
degrading treatment or
punishment



Gina Gillén Grillo,
diplomat at the Permanent
Mission of Costa Rica to the UN,
current Chair of the Universal
Jurisdiction Working Group
in the General Assembly

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Estela Barnes de Carlotto,
chair of Abuelas de
Plaza de Mayo



Diego García-Sayán,
judge at the Interamerican
Court of Human Rights



Shlomo Ben Ami,
former Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Israel



Reed Brody,
counsel and Spokesperson
for Human Rights Watch



George Kegoro,
director Ejecutivo de la Sección
de Kenya de la Comisión Inter-
nacional de Juristas. Kenya



William Bourdon,
abogado representante de
la acusación particular de
las víctimas en el caso de
Hissèn Habré



José Miguel Vivanco,
Americas Director at Human
Rights Watch



Helen Duffy,
Human Rights lawyer and
professor at Leiden University



Christopher Gevers,
professor at KwaZulu-Natal
University

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Raji Sourani,
director of the Palestinian
Centre for Human Rights



Naomi Roth-Arriza,
professor at University of California
Hastings College of Law



Tashi Tsering,
Research Associate at the York
Centre for Asian Research of
the York University in Toronto.
Canadá



José Ricardo de Prada Solaesa,
judge at the Criminal Chamber
of Audiencia Nacional in Spain



Martín Almada,
alternative Nobel Peace Prize,
Paraguayan activist



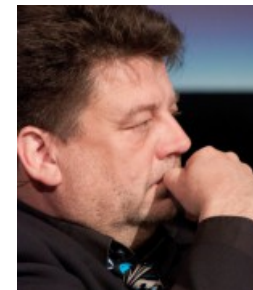
Kirsten Meerschaert,
Head of Office & Europe
Regional Coordinator at
Coalition for the International
Criminal Court



Fabricio Guariglia,
ICC Director of the
Prosecutions Division



Robert Heinsch,
professor at Leiden University



Wolfgang Kaleck,
founder of the European
Center for Constitutional
and Human Rights (ECCHR)

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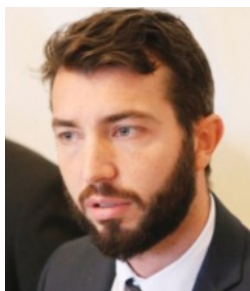
Dolores Delgado García,
prosecutor at Audiencia Nacional



Jürgen Schur,
legal officer at REDRESS



Alejo Ramos Padilla,
Federal Judge of the Republic
of Argentina



Bénédikt De Moerloose,
legal officer at TRIAL



Johan Galtung,
expert in international
mediation and peace



**Dato' Mohamad Ariff bin
Md Yusof,**
judge at the Kuala Lumpur
War Crimes Commission



Remo Carlotto,
chair of the Human Rights
Commission in the National
Congress of Argentina



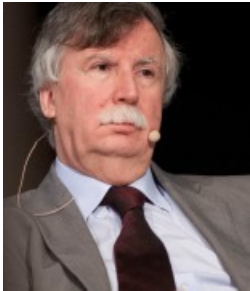
Kenneth Mann,
professor of Criminal Law
at Tel Aviv University



Paula Silverstolpe,
expert in piracy, UE Office
in Djibuti

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Joan Garcés,
lawyer in the Pinochet Case



Ariel Dulitzky,
member of the UN Working
Group of Enforced
Disappearances



Almudena Bernabéu,
Transitional Justice Director
at the center for justice and
accountability



Kai Ambos,
professor at Georg August
Universität Göttingen



Angela Mudukuti,
International Criminal
Justice Lawyer at the
Southern Africa Litigation
Centre (SALC)



Hennie Strydom,
professor at University
of Johannesburg



Fernando Andreu Merelles,
judge of the Audiencia
Nacional in Spain



Matevž Pezdirc,
Genocide Network Secretariat



Pubudu Sachithanandan,
ICC prosecutor

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Galo Alfredo Chiriboga Zambrano,
general prosecutor of Ecuador



Anees Ahmed,
chief of Legal Affairs for the
UN Mission in Liberia



Hugo Omar Cañón,
former General Prosecutor
of the Federal Chamber in
Bahía Blanca, Argentina



Constant K. Hometowu,
judge of the High Court in Ghana



Luis Guillermo Pérez,
general secretary for the
Americas for the International
Federation for Human Rights



Hannah Woolaver,
professor at Cape Town
University



Hugo Relva,
legal adviser to Amnesty
International's International
Justice team



Carlos Poveda Moreno,
professor at University
of Ecuador



Mia Swart,
professor at University of
Johannesburg

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Carlos Slepoy,
lawyer, expert in Universal
Jurisdiction cases



Adolfo Ferreiro,
member of the Senate
of Paraguay



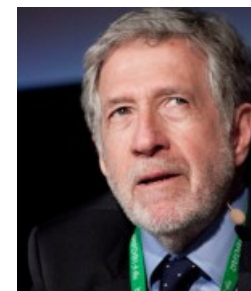
Manuel Ollé Sesé,
professor of International
Criminal Law in University
Complutense of Madrid



Otilia Maunganidze,
senior researcher in the office
of the Managing Director at
the Institute for Security
Studies (ISS)



José María Mena,
former prosecutor at the
High Court of Catalonia



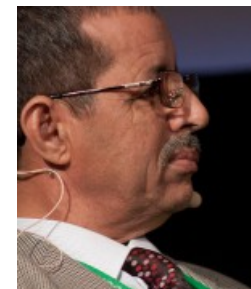
Hernán Hormazábal,
Criminal Law Professor



Mirna Perla,
former judge at the Supreme
Court of El Salvador



José E. Esteve,
lawyer for the Tibet Case
in Spain



Mohammed Louali Hocine,
Western Sahara Minister for
the occupied territories

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Michel De Salvia,
former secretary of the
European Court of Human
Rights



Nada Kiswanson,
senior legal Advocacy
Officer - Head of Europe
Office Al-Haq



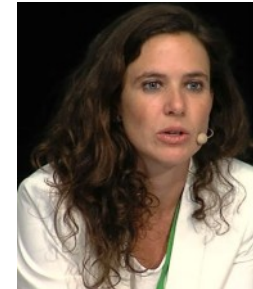
Juan Carlos Henao Pérez,
former President of the
Constitutional Court
of Colombia



Alejandro Salinas,
senior adviser to the Human
Rights Section of the Ministry
of Foreign Affairs of Chile



Gonzalo Martínez Fresneda,
lawyer and expert in Criminal
Law



Paloma Soria Montañés,
senior lawyer at Women's
Link Worldwide



Máximo Langer,
professor at UCLA School
of Law



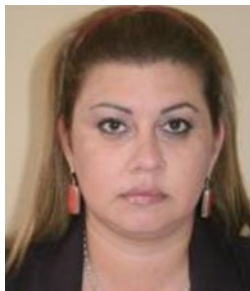
Ramón Sáez,
judge at Audiencia Nacional



Gaspar Llamazares,
IU Congressman in Spain

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Yudith Rolón Jacquet,
head of the General Office for
Truth, Justice and Redress of
the Ombudsman in Paraguay



Lloyd Kuveya,
senior legal advisor at the
Africa Regional Program
of the International
Commission of Jurists (ICJ)



María Lilia Pusineri,
professor at the Universidad
Columbia del Paraguay



Ana Mesutti,
lawyer in the Franco Regime
Case in Buenos Aires



Daniel Eduardo Rafecas,
federal judge of the Republic
of Argentina



Matías Bailone,
Attorney at the Supreme
Court of Argentina



Juan Martín Fresneda,
Human Rights Secretary
at the Ministry of Justice
of Argentina



María Laura Garrigós de Réboli,
president of Asociación Justicia
Legítima



Eduardo Barcesat,
professor at the University
of Buenos Aires

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Katya Salazar,
executive director of Due
Process of Law Foundation



Jorge Auat,
Head of the Prosecution for
crimes and human rights
violations committed during
the Argentinian dictatorship



Juan Torres,
professor of Economy at the
University of Sevilla



Julián Assange,
founder of Wikileaks



María del Carmen Roqueta,
judge of the Criminal Chamber
at the Federal Tribunal of
Argentina



Horacio Verbitsky,
president of Centro de
Estudios Legales y Sociales



Aitor Martínez,
director of the Projects
Department of FIBGAR



Arnaldo Giuzzio,
member of the Senate
in Paraguay



Luis Torres González,
legal officer of the Human
Rights National Institute
of Chile

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Gonzalo Bonifaz Tweddle,
diplomat of Peru



Alejandra Gils Carbó,
general prosecutor of
Argentina



Naakow Grant-Hayford,
expert in international
mediation and peace



Marco Antonio Abarca Díaz,
professor at the University
of Puerto Rico



Andreas Schüller,
legal officer at the European
Center for Constitutional and
Human Rights (ECCHR)



Ana Pérez Cepeda,
professor at University
of Salamanca



Irene Lozano Domingo,
congresswoman in the Spanish
Parliament



Tan Sri Norian Mai,
Chair of de la Fundación
Perdانا Global Peace



Joaquín González,
professor of International
Relations at University
Alfonso X El Sabio

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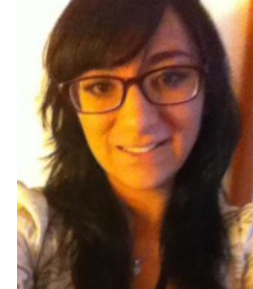
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Ndiva Kofele-Kale,
professor at Southern Methodist
University (Dallas, Texas)



Manuel Ventura,
director of The Peace and
Justice Initiative



Nancy J. López,
director of Advocacy at the
Mexican Commission of
Defence and Promotion
of Human Rights (CMDPDH)



Ybhg Dato' Dr. Pahamin Rajab,
prosecutor for the High Court
of Malaysia



Benjamín Cuellar,
Salvadorian activist



Alberto Andrés Aguirre,
former coordinator of
COMENIUS European
Programme



Soraya Rodríguez,
spokesperson of PSOE in
the Spanish Congress



Erika Degortes,
expert in international
mediation and peace



Rafael Guerrero,
journalist and expert in
historical memory



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The Legal Department of FIBGAR is responsible for this project. For further information, please contact with:



Manuel M. Vergara Céspedes,
Director of the Legal Department - FIBGAR

mvergara@fibgar.org
91 433 29 40
C/ Del Codo nº 5, 28005
Madrid (Spain)

Preamble

In recent decades, Universal Jurisdiction has proved to be a necessary instrument for ensuring a full and completely satisfactory judicial response to international crimes. From the precursors of international law to the present day, the international community has consolidated the idea that, due to their nature and seriousness, certain crimes transcend the responsibility of a particular sovereign State and affect humanity as a whole. Therefore, all States are responsible for identifying and prosecuting those crimes in order to ensure an end to impunity for the perpetrators.

International criminal law has developed considerably, from the establishment of the Courts of Nuremberg and Tokyo to the creation of ad hoc tribunals. However, a major advance in International Criminal Law was the adoption of the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court, and its review in the Conference of Kampala. By offering a rational, measured response to criminal offences, it has led to progress in protecting victims and in combating impunity. Nonetheless, the response is still incomplete because of the many limitations of the International Criminal Court. Therefore, its function needs to be strengthened at the local level by applying the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, which is already recognised in various international instruments and national legislation as an appropriate mechanism for enforcing the actions of international justice at the national level.

The application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction by legal practitioners and its inclusion in national legislation over the past few decades leads us to analyse and reflect on its achievements, failures and challenges. The Princeton Principles and those of Cairo-Arusha went a long way in defining the key ideas of Universal Jurisdiction. However, years after their publication, the application of this principle has undergone new developments, advances, corrections and limitations in various countries, in many cases increasing the lack of protection. It is therefore vital that these principles be brought up to date and broadened, as well as disseminated and promoted on a political level.

Some of the crimes included in this declaration are already subject to prosecution in accordance with the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, while others, such as those included in Principle 3, have been defined and their prosecution is set out as an

aspiration to ensure the full protection and survival of humanity in the face of major economic, financial and environmental aggression.

Consequently, the underlying aim of these Principles and their annex is rooted in three objectives: 1) to reaffirm the doctrinal efforts made thus far, 2) to promote the codification of those elements around which there is consensus, and 3) to report new sources of impunity and the means to prevent it in order to establish an *opinio iuris* to consolidate Universal Jurisdiction as an effective instrument in eradicating impunity and protecting the victims and the ecosystem.

Principle 1 – Concept

Universal Jurisdiction establishes the right or the obligation of a national court to examine and, if appropriate, judge the crimes included in Principles 2, 3 and 4 by implementing national and/or international criminal law, regardless of where those crimes were committed, the nationality of the alleged perpetrator and the victims, or any other connection to the State exercising the jurisdiction.

Principle 2 – Crimes subject to Universal Jurisdiction

Universal Jurisdiction shall apply to international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, piracy, slavery, enforced disappearance, torture, human trafficking, extrajudicial executions and the crime of aggression. Such crimes may be committed in many ways, including through economic activities and those that affect the environment.

Principle 3 – Economic and environmental crimes subject to Universal Jurisdiction

Universal Jurisdiction shall also apply to economic and environmental crimes the extent and scale of which seriously affect group or collective human rights or cause the irreversible destruction of ecosystems.

Principle 4 – Scope of Universal Jurisdiction

Without prejudice to the provisions in Principles 2 and 3, States may extend the scope of the Universal Jurisdiction they exercise to include the crimes set out in international agreements they have ratified.

Principle 5 – Connected crimes

Similarly, the exercise of Universal Jurisdiction may also apply to the crimes connected to those included in Principles 2, 3 and 4.

Principle 6 – Criminal and/or civil liability

1. Natural or legal persons may be criminally and/or civilly liable for their actions or omissions in the crimes listed in Principles 2, 3 and 4, regardless of the manner and degree of their participation or concealment of the crime, without prejudice to the potential civil liability of the State.
2. Criminal liability extends to higher ranks in organised power structures, and to their subordinates, who may not allege due obedience.
3. The criminal liability of legal persons for the crimes listed in Principles 2, 3 and 4 shall be recognised by domestic or international law regardless of the trial and, where pertinent, sentencing of the individuals actually committing the crime. In the absence of legal provisions for corporate criminal liability, the legal or de facto representative of the legal persons concerned shall be liable.
4. All the assets, property and securities of the party committing the crime that are directly or indirectly related to the crime committed shall be seized, to the extent established in the judicial ruling, to repair in full the damages caused.
5. The competent authorities shall not recognise bank or corporate secrecy, or any other measure that could favour fraudulent corporate bankruptcy or lead to the mass withdrawal or transfer of funds in an attempt to circumvent the monetary obligations resulting from committing the crimes listed in Principles 2, 3 and 4.

Principle 7 – Universal civil jurisdiction

Universal Jurisdiction may be applied in civil law separately from criminal law,

provided the damage is due to one of the crimes listed in Principles 2 and 3.

Principle 8 – Application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction when not included in national legislation

1. All States shall include the principle of Universal Jurisdiction in their national laws.
2. The competent authorities should apply the principle of Universal Jurisdiction for the crimes set out in Principles 2 and 3, regardless of whether that principle is included in their national laws.

Principle 9 – Statute of limitations, amnesty, pardon and immunity

1. The provisions of the States where the crimes were committed in relation to the expiry of the statute of limitations, amnesty, pardon and other measures for the exclusion of liability shall not apply to the crimes listed in Principles 2 y 3.
2. Immunity and special procedural guidelines pertaining to the official position of a person that are the subject of national law shall not limit the exercise of Universal Jurisdiction by the judges of the State applying it.

Principle 10 – Principle of legality under international criminal law

The actions or omissions involved in perpetrating the crimes included in Principles 2 and 3 shall be examined and, where applicable, judged in accordance with the principle of Universal Jurisdiction if such acts or negligence constituted crimes under international law when they were committed, despite their not being codified as crimes in domestic law.

Principle 11 – Initiation of the enquiry and presence of the alleged perpetrator during the proceedings

1. In accordance with the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, the competent authorities shall initiate an examination of the facts and the persons responsible for any of the crimes set out in Principles 2 and 3, irrespective of the extent of their participation and without their needing to be present. In all cases, the alleged perpetrator shall be granted access to the proceedings and allowed the right of defence.

2. If the alleged perpetrator is not present when the enquiry begins, the competent authority of the inquiring state may agree to the appropriate precautionary measures, with a view to guaranteeing the presence of the alleged perpetrator, the evidence and the reparations for victims.

3. The competent authority of the State where the alleged perpetrator is located shall agree to the precautionary measures necessary to guarantee the presence of the alleged perpetrator, the objective of the proceedings and the reparations for victims, regardless of the existence of a prior request for extradition.

Principle 12 – Complementarity and cooperation with the International Criminal Court and other international criminal justice mechanisms

1. The governing principle of complementarity between the International Criminal Court and national courts shall also apply to those applying Universal Jurisdiction.

2. States shall cooperate, through their national courts and the exercise of Universal Jurisdiction, with the International Criminal Court and other international criminal justice mechanisms in the investigation and/or prosecution of international crimes.

Principle 13 – Conflicts of national jurisdiction

1. The national jurisdictions of two or more States may initiate an enquiry into the same act concurrently, in which case they shall cooperate in full to ensure that the case is resolved in the best possible way.

2. Priority in conducting the enquiry should be given to the State that, pursuant to the pro actione principle, proves to be in the best position to judge the acts, with no pre-established hierarchy regarding the rights of a given jurisdiction. In evaluating the conditions for the trial, the following aspects shall be considered among others:

- The effective right of access to justice
- The possibilities for a credible trial in the country where the acts were committed
- The location of the alleged perpetrator
- Access to evidence
- The measures of protection available to victims and witnesses, and
- The independence and impartiality with which the proceedings are and shall be substantiated.

3. A mechanism for resolving potential jurisdictional conflicts shall be established.

Principle 14 – Mutual legal assistance

1. The competent State authorities shall assist one another in all proceedings initiated by virtue of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, provided that the petitioner acts in good faith.

2. The principle of cooperation shall be subordinated to the existence of reasonable doubt in believing that the alleged perpetrator could be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment, forced disappearance, sentenced to death or denied a fair trial, even if the petitioning State offers guarantees.

3. The allegation of the absence of double criminality by States shall pose no obstacle to providing legal assistance.

4. Non recognition of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction by the State from which assistance is requested shall pose no obstacle to providing legal assistance.

Principle 15 – Extradition

1. States shall refuse requests for extradition/surrender by another State, even one with Universal Jurisdiction, when there are firm grounds for believing that the alleged perpetrator could be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, forced disappearance, sentenced to death or denied a fair trial, even if the petitioning State offers guarantees.

2. Any State refusing a request for extradition on any grounds shall investigate and, if appropriate, conduct its own hearing.

3. The allegation by States of the absence of double criminality shall pose no obstacle to granting the extradition/surrender.

4. Failure of the requested State to recognise the principle of Universal Jurisdiction shall not prevent the granting of extradition/surrender.

Principle 16 – *Ne bis in idem*

States applying the principle of Universal Jurisdiction shall not judge any person already judged by another court, unless the purpose of the criminal proceedings before that court were for the purpose of shielding the person concerned from

criminal responsibility.

Principle 17 – Transitional Justice

States may apply the principle of Universal Jurisdiction to Transitional Justice systems when impartially and independently applied international standards of justice have failed to be respected, or when they have been used to for the purpose of shielding the person concerned from criminal responsibility.

Principle 18 – Independence of the competent authorities

The competent authorities shall act with total independence and impartiality and without any interference whatsoever in relation to the proceedings initiated by virtue of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction.

Principle 19 – Specialised judicial, prosecution and police institutions

All States shall set up police, judicial and/or prosecution bodies specialised in investigating and judging the crimes listed in Principles 2 and 3.

Principle 20 – Rights of victims and protection of witnesses and experts

1. In applying the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, the term victim refers to all persons who have suffered harm, individually or collectively, as a consequence of the crimes listed in Principles 2, 3 and 4, as well as to their immediate family or dependants of the direct victim, and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization, regardless of whether the alleged perpetrator has been identified, arrested, judged or sentenced.
2. The competent authorities shall safeguard the rights of victims during the proceedings and the execution of the sentence, and in all cases, prevent secondary victimisation.
3. All efforts shall be made to ensure the widest participation and the victims' right to receive legal information during the proceedings.
4. States investigating, judging and/or cooperating with another State during proceedings initiated by virtue of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction shall take all

steps to guarantee the safety, privacy and physical and psychological wellbeing of victims, witnesses and experts.

Principle 21 – Procedural rights and guarantees of the alleged perpetrator

The rights and guarantees of the alleged perpetrator shall be respected during all stages of the enquiry and trial, in accordance with international law.

Principle 22 – Interpretation

Nothing in this document shall be interpreted as imposing restrictions on the application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction pursuant to international law or as limiting the rights of the victims to truth, justice and full redress.

Annex to the Madrid – Buenos Aires Principles of Universal Jurisdiction:

Among the potential crimes that fit the category introduced in Principle 3 mention must be made of the following ones:

- ❖ Fraudulent adulteration of food
- ❖ Price speculation in relation to staple products on which the survival or health of people in general depend
- ❖ Child labour and the breach of internationally recognized workers' rights
- ❖ The illegal diversion of international funds approved for the alleviation of human disasters
- ❖ The illegal sale of weapons to places or zones of conflict, or expressly subject to export bans by the United Nations
- ❖ Fraudulent corporate bankruptcy or the mass withdrawal of funds in an attempt to circumvent monetary responsibilities arising from the commission of the crimes set out in these Principles
- ❖ The illicit use of the property of the victims of the crimes set out in these Principles
- ❖ Forced displacement of communities for the purpose of exploiting natural resources in their ancestral lands
- ❖ The illegal obstruction of the use of cross-border resources such as the severe pollution of international rivers
- ❖ The illicit exploitation of natural resources seriously affecting the health, life or the peaceful co-existence of humans with their natural habitat in the area where the exploitation takes place, and
- ❖ The irreversible destruction of ecosystems.

