

Crimes Against Humanity: A Human Rights Perspective

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<https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2024.13.1.2>

Abstract

This research article explores the multifaceted concept of crimes against humanity through the lens of international human rights, examining its historical origins, legal framework, and contemporary challenges. Tracing the evolution from the aftermath of World War II to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the paper emphasizes the human rights implications of these crimes, elucidating the violation of fundamental rights on a mass scale. By analyzing recent developments and case studies, the article underscores the imperative of a global commitment to justice, accountability, and the protection of human dignity in the face of crimes that transcend national boundaries. The research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the intersection of human rights and crimes against humanity, advocating for a holistic approach that integrates legal principles with universal values.

Keywords: Contemporary Challenges, Crimes Against Humanity, Human Rights Implications.

Introduction

Crimes committed against humanity are offences that go beyond national borders, challenging the global community to confront and address acts that deeply disturb humanity's conscience. They have their roots in the aftermath of World War II. Have been solidified through legal frameworks. These crimes highlight a violation of human rights on a large scale. This introduction explores the origins, legal advancements and current challenges associated with crimes against humanity, particularly focusing on understanding this phenomenon through the lens of human rights. Emerging from the horrors witnessed during the Nuremberg Trials, crimes against humanity were. They are acknowledged as acts carried out as part of a systematic attack targeting any civilian population. The legal development of this concept enshrined in instruments such as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) demonstrates an effort to hold accountable those responsible for severe offences that go beyond national boundaries (Roberts, 2017). This research delves into the implications for rights in crimes against humanity, examining closely how they violate fundamental rights, such as life, liberty, security and freedom, from torture, discrimination and persecution.

By approaching the subject from a human rights perspective, this investigation aims to highlight the connection between these crimes and the fundamental principles of human rights law. It emphasizes how every individual's inherent dignity is at stake. We will delve into the challenges of preventing and prosecuting crimes against humanity, taking into account factors such as

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Compliance with ethical standards: There are no conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial). This study did not receive any funding.

jurisdiction, state sovereignty and complex geopolitical dynamics. Our analysis will encompass real-life examples shedding light on efforts and potential ways to strengthen the global legal framework. In essence, this comprehensive introduction lays the foundation for an exploration of crimes against humanity by examining context, legal complexities, and human rights considerations. By conducting this inquiry, our aim is to contribute to the conversation about the need for global dedication to justice, accountability and safeguarding human dignity in response to these crimes that demand collective action (Pons et al., 2022).

Historical Context

The origins of crimes against humanity can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II, a time when unprecedented and horrifying atrocities came to light. In response, the Nuremberg Trials were held as a moment in law. These trials aimed to hold accountable those individuals who had committed crimes that went beyond criminality and war crimes. Taking place from 1945 to 1946, the Nuremberg Trials played a role in shaping the concept of crimes against humanity. They specifically addressed the actions of individuals affiliated with the Nazi regime who had orchestrated systematic attacks against populations (Skogly, 2001).

The trials did not seek justice for the victims. They also aimed to establish a precedent for international justice by acknowledging the need to address such large-scale atrocities. This pivotal moment they led to an understanding that crimes against humanity are distinct from crimes and war crimes, forcing the international community to reevaluate its legal frameworks in order to confront the immense suffering endured by civilian populations.

Significant legal advancements during this era formed the basis for the establishment of crimes against humanity in law. These crimes were recognized as offences and deemed worthy of specialized attention (Robinson, 1999).

In this section exploring the evolution of crimes against humanity, we will delve into moments and legal complexities that influenced our understanding of these crimes. Through an examination of events like the Nuremberg Trials and the subsequent advancements in practices, we can gain insights into the evolution of this concept over time. As a result, crimes against humanity have come to be acknowledged as a category within the realm of law.

Legal Framework

The legal principles surrounding crimes against humanity have evolved since their recognition during the Nuremberg Trials. At the core of these principles is the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). This document outlines the definitions, elements and jurisdictional boundaries for prosecuting crimes against humanity on a scale. Enacted in 1998 and put into effect in 2002, the Rome Statute established the ICC as a tribunal for holding individuals accountable for severe international crimes, including crimes against humanity. Article 7 of the Rome Statute defines *crimes* against humanity as acts committed as part of an attack targeting any population (Bassiouni, 1999).

The legal framework described in the Rome Statute sets out criteria that need to be met for an act against humanity to be considered a crime. These criteria encompass actions like murder, extermination, enslavement, torture and other forms of treatment. Furthermore, it requires that there is an organized assault targeting civilians. The statute also highlights the importance of accountability by emphasizing that individuals can be held responsible for their actions under the law.

Importantly, the Rome Statute grants the International Criminal Court (ICC) jurisdiction over crimes against humanity. This means that the court has the authority to investigate and prosecute these crimes if they occur within a state party's territory or if a national of a state party commits them. The ICC jurisdiction works in conjunction with systems that promote collaboration between the court and domestic laws.

Moreover, conventions, treaties, regional courts and ad hoc tribunals also address crimes against humanity. These instruments collectively contribute to establishing a system with the goal of preventing impunity for heinous acts. In this section that explores crimes against humanity, we will delve into the intricacies of the framework. We will explore the provisions outlined in the Rome Statute and other relevant legal instruments. By analyzing definitions, elements, and jurisdictional aspects, our objective is to provide an understanding of the foundations that underpin the prosecution and prevention of crimes against humanity on a global scale.

Human Rights Implications

Crimes classified as acts against humanity, involve the violation of rights, causing suffering to individuals and communities. In this section of the discussion, we will focus on the implications these crimes have on rights, emphasizing how they seriously infringe upon the principles enshrined in human rights law. Crimes against humanity greatly impact the right to life, which is a right. Actions such as murder, extermination and widespread violence directly target this right by depriving individuals of their entitlements (DeGuzman et al., 2011).

In the commission of crimes against humanity, one of the rights that gets undermined is the right to freedom and personal security. The acts of abductions, enforced disappearances, and systematic detentions not only infringe upon freedoms but also instill a sense of fear and intimidation within the communities affected by these actions. Crimes such as torture and other inhumane acts directly contradict the right to be free from degrading treatment or punishment. Inflicting deliberate physical or psychological harm undermines people's dignity and flagrantly violates universally recognized norms of rights (Groenhuijsen et al., 2011).

Furthermore, crimes against humanity frequently involve the persecution of individuals based on factors such as race, religion, nationality or political affiliation. Such actions directly violate the principle of non-discrimination, which is an aspect of human rights law. Moreover, they worsen existing tensions. Contribute to cycles of violence and oppression. This section aims to examine how crimes against humanity impact rights by highlighting their connection to human rights agreements. The analysis will delve into the effects on rights and society as a whole in areas affected by these crimes. It emphasizes the need for addressing these violations from a human rights perspective. Essentially, this exploration seeks to shed light on how crimes against humanity challenge the core of human rights principles. It underscores the necessity for a coordinated response to secure justice, accountability and the restoration of dignity for those who have suffered at the hands of perpetrators (Nasution, A.R. 2017).

Contemporary Challenges

In today's world, the prevention and prosecution of crimes against humanity face a range of challenges that test both the effectiveness of legal frameworks and the commitment of the global community to upholding justice and human rights. This section explores these challenges, including issues related to jurisdiction and the complexities arising from dynamics.

Challenges in Jurisdiction: One of the challenges when it comes to addressing crimes against humanity is navigating through a complex web of jurisdictional issues surrounding their

prosecution. Seeking justice for these offences encounters obstacles that span from limitations within legal frameworks to resistance at domestic levels.

Limitations of Universal Jurisdiction: Although the International Criminal Court (ICC) has played a role in prosecuting crimes against humanity, its jurisdiction is not all-encompassing. The authority of the ICC only extends to crimes committed within or by nationals of states that are party to it. As a result, there are areas where crimes against humanity might go unpunished due to the absence of ICC jurisdiction.

Non-Member States and National Jurisdiction: The effectiveness of efforts is further impeded by the fact that not all countries have ratified or become parties to the Rome Statute.

In situations where crimes against humanity occur in countries that are not party to the International Criminal Court (ICC), the ICC's authority is limited. It becomes the responsibility of national legal systems to handle these crimes. However, some countries may need more infrastructure or political determination to carry out such prosecutions within their borders (Jalloh et al., 2012).

State Sovereignty and Territorial Boundaries: Crimes against humanity often take place within a country's territory, which makes it a delicate matter when considering jurisdiction. Some countries resist outside intervention based on notions of sovereignty, thus hindering the pursuit of justice for acts that deeply shock the conscience.

Political Considerations and Power Dynamics: The quest for justice can be influenced by factors and power dynamics. Powerful states or entities may shield individuals from being held accountable by using influence to obstruct legal processes. The politicization of proceedings presents a challenge to impartiality and fairness in adjudication (Geras, N. 2013).

Complementarity and National Capacities: The principle of complementarity plays a role in how the ICC operates since it relies on the legal system's ability and willingness to address crimes against humanity. Weak or corrupt judicial institutions, inadequate legal frameworks and political instability can hinder prosecutions, resulting in an environment where perpetrators go unpunished.

Challenges of Jurisdiction Beyond Borders: Some states try to assert their authority over crimes against humanity committed by non-nationals in countries. However, this approach can face diplomatic obstacles as it involves navigating legal systems and potential conflicts with the jurisdiction of other nations.

Addressing these challenges requires a balance between international law principles, respect for the sovereignty of states and the need to hold those responsible accountable. It is crucial for the global community to collaboratively tackle these complexities in order to strengthen the framework and ensure that jurisdictional issues do not hinder the pursuit of justice for crimes against humanity (Lattimer et al., 2003).

State Sovereignty and Political Factors: One of the challenges in dealing with crimes against humanity arises from the interplay between state sovereignty and political considerations. This complex relationship introduces obstacles to effectively preventing, prosecuting and responding internationally to these offences.

Concerns about Sovereignty: State sovereignty, which is a principle in international relations, often clashes with the necessity to intervene in cases involving crimes against humanity. States, keen on protecting their autonomy, may resist interference by asserting that resolving matters falls solely under their jurisdiction. Such resistance can impede efforts aimed at holding perpetrators accountable and obstruct justice for victims. The issue of consensual interventions, whether they are military or judicial, brings up complex questions about respecting the sovereignty of nations. When international actors attempt to investigate or intervene in situations involving crimes against

humanity, they may face resistance or condemnation, especially if the affected state rejects their involvement (Hussain et al., 2023).

Political considerations such as alliances and geopolitical interests can result in enforcement or selective inaction when it comes to addressing crimes against humanity. Powerful states may protect their allies from being held accountable for these crimes, and the authority of the Security Council could be hindered by veto powers, leading to a politicized approach (Khan et al., S., 2023). The influence of factors can shield individuals, including political leaders, from being held accountable for their actions. Concerns about regions disrupting relations or sparking conflicts may discourage the international community from seeking justice against those responsible for crimes against humanity (Khan et al., 2023).

The systems established to handle crimes against humanity can be exploited for motives. There might be delays or hurdles in the process, and legal proceedings could be swayed by interference. This undermines the fairness and efficacy of tribunals.

When it comes to dealing with crimes against humanity, political factors can impact the decision-making processes of organizations. Disagreements among member states in the United Nations Security Council may result in a lack of consensus, making it challenging to implement measures aimed at preventing or addressing these offences.

Effectively addressing the challenges presented by the sovereignty of states and political factors requires a nuanced approach. It is crucial to acknowledge the importance of autonomy while also recognizing our responsibility as a community to prevent and respond to crimes against humanity. Achieving this delicate balance calls for leadership, finesse and a steadfast commitment to principles such as justice, human rights and accountability (Hussain et al., 2023).

The lack of enforcement and impunity pose obstacles in dealing with crimes against humanity. Perpetrators often evade accountability and legal consequences for their actions. This failure in enforcement undermines our efforts to deter offences and erodes principles like justice and human rights.

In cases where national legal systems could be stronger, this lack of enforcement is exacerbated. Corruption, inadequate systems and limited resources can impede states' ability to investigate and prosecute crimes against humanity. This vulnerability allows wrongdoers to operate freely within their countries without facing repercussions.

A Lack of Political Will: Often, there is a lack of will to hold perpetrators accountable for crimes against humanity, whether at the international level. Political considerations, relationships and concerns about regions can create reluctance to pursue justice. As a result, those responsible for these offences are able to escape punishment (Khan et al., 2023).

Security Concerns: In regions affected by conflicts where crimes against humanity may take place, security concerns often obstruct enforcement. The volatile nature of environments can discourage efforts, making it challenging for law enforcement agencies to operate and gather evidence. Perpetrators may exploit this insecurity to continue their actions without fear of being prosecuted.

Challenges in International Cooperation: Collaboration between states and international organizations is essential for ensuring accountability. However, obstacles in cooperation, such as tensions, conflicting interests and varying legal systems, can hinder the sharing of information and the execution of arrest warrants. These challenges contribute to a situation where wrongdoing goes unpunished. International courts that are set up to prosecute crimes against humanity may need more resources, which can hinder their ability to investigate and bring cases to trial thoroughly. This limitation can result in delays, incomplete investigations and difficulties in ensuring justice is served for the victims. The issue of impunity can be exacerbated by situations where certain

individuals or groups receive protection based on alliances or influential connections. The perception of bias in the application of justice undermines the credibility of efforts aimed at combating crimes against humanity.

Addressing the problem of impunity and strengthening the mechanisms for enforcing laws requires an effort to strengthen systems, promote international cooperation and overcome political obstacles. It necessitates a commitment to justice that goes beyond considerations of holding those responsible for crimes against humanity accountable (Khan et al., 2021).

The prevention of crimes against humanity faces challenges that are intertwined with factors. These complexities arise from the interactions between countries, power dynamics and global political considerations, all of which significantly influence how we respond to offences and seek justice for the victims.

Crimes against humanity often occur in regions plagued by conflict and political instability. The complexity arises when attempts are made to address these crimes while simultaneously dealing with conflicts. Striking a balance becomes challenging as we strive to prioritize justice without exacerbating the existing conflicts.

Peace negotiations: Geopolitical factors can have an impact on peace negotiations where pursuing justice for crimes against humanity competes with the need to establish stability and resolve conflicts. Striking a balance between these objectives may require compromises that prioritize finding solutions over accountability, which unfortunately perpetuates a cycle of impunity.

Diplomatic Relations: When it comes to seeking justice for crimes against humanity, it is only sometimes sailing for relations. Accusations of human rights abuses can create tensions between countries. This can make them hesitant to support initiatives that might implicate their allies or even themselves in these offences.

Security Council Dynamics: The United Nations Security Council plays a role in addressing crimes against humanity. However, the dynamics within the Security Council, especially when it comes to the use of veto powers, can sometimes become obstacles that hinder taking action. Political considerations among its members may also hinder the adoption of resolutions aimed at ensuring accountability (Kanwel et al., 2023).

Influence of Major Powers: It is important to acknowledge that major powers hold influence in affairs, and their geopolitical calculations can shape how they respond to crimes against humanity. The reluctance of nations to support or endorse interventions can undermine efforts aimed at addressing these offences. When crimes against humanity occur, they often result in displacements and refugee crises. The complexity arises when different states respond with varying levels of aid asylum policies or restrictions based on their considerations. This further complicates matters for those affected by these crimes.

Addressing crimes against humanity through coalitions can be a task because different countries within the coalition often have their geopolitical interests. This can make it challenging to coordinate a response, which in turn hampers the effectiveness of initiatives.

In order to effectively prevent and address crimes against humanity, it is essential to comprehend and navigate these complexities. International efforts should strive to strike a balance between seeking justice and taking into account the nature of politics. The solutions put forth should prioritize holding individuals accountable while also considering the factors at play (Ayeni et al., 2022).

Mass Atrocity Prevention

Preventing mass atrocities like crimes against humanity is a matter of importance for our community; in the face of challenges that our world encounters, this section delves into the aspects of preventing mass atrocities. It emphasizes the significance of implementing measures that encourage collaboration and uphold principles of rights.

Early Warning Systems: The timely detection of threats and swift response are vital in preventing atrocities. By developing and improving warning systems that incorporate intelligence, human rights monitoring, and conflict analysis, we gain insights into emerging dangers. This enables us to act before violence escalates.

Political Engagement: Diplomacy plays a role in preventing mass atrocities. Engaging in efforts to address root causes and conflicts and promote political solutions contributes to stability while reducing the conditions that may give rise to atrocities. Building networks enhances our ability as an international community to respond effectively (Islam et al., 2022).

Human Rights Education and Advocacy: Promoting human rights education and advocating for their protection is an approach to preventing mass atrocities, and creating a nurturing culture that values and respects rights at the level is crucial in empowering communities to resist and report abuses when necessary. Advocacy efforts on a large scale help raise awareness. Mobilize support for taking preventive action.

In order to prevent atrocities, it is important to promote peace and resolve conflicts. By investing in initiatives that focus on building peace, implementing conflict resolution mechanisms, and fostering reconciliation efforts, we can establish environments that are less prone to violence and mass atrocities.

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle underlines the community's obligation to prevent and respond to atrocities. States, both individually and collectively, must fulfil their responsibility to safeguard populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. To prevent atrocities effectively on a scale, it is important to strengthen mechanisms such as bolstering the capacity of tribunals like the International Criminal Court (ICC) so that they can hold those responsible for these acts accountable. When there is a certainty of consequences, it serves as a deterrent. Contributes to fostering a culture of accountability (Bilal & Hussain, 2022). Implementing targeted sanctions and measures against individuals or entities involved in or supporting mass atrocities can serve as a tool. These actions convey the message that impunity will not be tolerated while potentially disrupting the ability of perpetrators to carry out their acts (Khan et al., 2023).

Taking actions to protect civilians, such as deploying peacekeeping forces, can discourage wrongdoers. Provide vulnerable populations with a sense of safety. Communities must ensure that protection mechanisms are both effective and sufficient.

Coordination on a Global Scale: Preventing mass atrocities requires efforts among countries, international organizations, civil society and regional actors. By establishing partnerships and improving coordination mechanisms, we can amplify the impact of initiatives and foster a collective commitment to safeguarding populations (Khan et al., 2023).

Addressing Root Causes and Taking Comprehensive Approaches: By tackling the underlying factors that contribute to mass atrocities and adopting an approach that integrates legal and humanitarian strategies, the international community can strive towards creating a world where preventing mass atrocities becomes an attainable goal shared by all (Tovar & Lin, 2022).

Conclusion

When confronted with crimes against humanity, the global community faces a duty to ensure justice, accountability and the prevention of atrocities. Examining the origins of frameworks, human rights implications, and the challenges of today sheds light on the nature of addressing these offences. Reflecting on the aftermath of World War II and the Nuremberg Trials serves as a reminder of why it is essential to confront acts that deeply shock our collective conscience. The legal framework established by the Rome Statute and international conventions lays the foundation for prosecuting crimes against humanity. However, obstacles arise due to complexities, geopolitical considerations and concerns surrounding state sovereignty. It is crucial to acknowledge that crimes against humanity have human rights implications as they directly violate rights like life, liberty and freedom from torture. Seeking justice for these necessitates adopting a human rights perspective that recognizes and upholds the dignity of every individual. Present-day challenges include issues such as lack of enforcement and impunity fueled by complexities—highlighting a struggle to prevent and address crimes against humanity. The selective application of justice, influenced by factors and complex dynamics in relations, contributes to an environment where perpetrators can evade accountability.

To prevent atrocities, the global community needs to take action. These actions involve setting up alert systems, engaging in discussions, and embracing the Responsibility to Protect principle. Furthermore, it is crucial to promote education on rights and support initiatives that build peace and establish partnerships. These steps are all essential in fostering a culture of prevention and resilience against atrocities. To achieve justice for crimes against humanity on a scale, a collaborative approach is necessary. This approach should uphold human rights principles, strengthen mechanisms, and address complex geopolitical issues directly. By tackling the root causes of these crimes, implementing measures, and recognizing our responsibility, we can strive to create a world where committing crimes against humanity is unimaginable and where justice prevails in the face of the most serious offenses against humanity.

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