This chapter examines the immunities enjoyed by various categories of officials of States and international organizations. It identifies jurisdictional immunity as one of the key legal techniques by which diplomatic relations and, more broadly, international relations and cooperation can be maintained. It recognises that recent developments in international law have increasingly required that immunities be scrutinised and justified, particularly where they impact on individual rights. Among the most striking of such challenges to immunities are those that have arisen in relation to measures which seek to bring an end to the impunity of persons who commit the most serious international crimes, including measures such as the development of extraterritorial jurisdiction and the establishment of international criminal tribunals. A range of judicial decisions is reviewed in order to determine how
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international law has attempted to reconcile such conflicting priorities in this respect.

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