This chapter looks at the purposes and principles of international criminal law. International criminal law seeks to ensure that perpetrators of certain heinous acts are criminally liable for their acts, either before national or international criminal courts or tribunals. It is a fairly recent addition to international law and it was not until after the end of the Second World War that it became accepted that international law authorizes the criminal prosecution of individual perpetrators of serious offences. The chapter begins by discussing the most important sources of international criminal law. It then examines the prosecution of international crimes before international criminal courts, including the conditions for prosecuting suspected international criminals before the International Criminal Court. It also discusses the national prosecution of international crimes and the obligation found in a number of conventions to criminalize and prosecute certain conduct.