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**Statement by Cherith Norman**  
**Minister Counselor for UN Management and Reform**  
**Fifth Committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> Resumed Part of the 71<sup>st</sup> UN General Assembly**  
**Agenda Item 149: Cross-Cutting Issues**  
**May 8, 2017**

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*[Check against delivery]*

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have limited our remarks to focus on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse.

I would like to thank the Special Coordinator for Improving the UN's Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Ms. Jane Holl Lute, the Assistant Secretary-General for Field Support, Ms. Lisa Buttenheim, and the Chairman of the ACABQ, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for introducing their respective reports on the UN's effort to combat sexual exploitation and abuse. We welcome the presence of Under-Secretary-General Heidi Mendoza and the critical role OIOS plays in fostering accountability for perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse and UN peacekeeping missions writ large.

My delegation welcomes the importance that Secretary-General Guterres has placed on the serious issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, as demonstrated by the actions that he has taken in his first few months in office, including establishment of a UN system-wide SEA Task Force which he chairs. We also welcome the tireless efforts of UN personnel around the world in addressing SEA, including assisting victims.

The report of the Secretary-General (A/71/818 and Add.1) on "Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: a New Approach" outlines several initiatives in the areas of prevention, transparency and accountability that will move the UN forward in ending this scourge, particularly in realizing a truly victim-centered approach. We support these initiatives, and it is equally important for the Secretary-General to have our collective support for his authority to execute these initiatives. We also must take every effort to ensure that our decisions actually prevent and address SEA on the ground.

My delegation believes a more thorough analysis of previous efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General should have been outlined, including an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of these efforts, and why the proposals before us today would fill identified gaps and positively affect victims of SEA and look forward to discussing this issue in the informals to come.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation fully supports the Secretary-General's focus on victims and strongly supports the Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse adopted in 2007. In recent years, the Resident Coordinator has served as the focal point for executing this strategy through in-country networks of local implementing partners. My delegation would like to better understand whether this system has adequately implemented the Victims' Assistance Strategy, and how inter-agency cooperation will be maintained at the country level, given the new proposals by the Secretary-General to ensure that victims receive the support they need.

My delegation would also like to stress the importance of an inter-agency, UN system-wide approach to enforcement of the zero tolerance policy. We have come a long way in advancing transparency and accountability for sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers in the last couple of years, but critical gaps remain elsewhere in the UN system, as noted in the present report. In this regard, we welcome the work of the Special Coordinator to enhance coordination among the UN funds and programs for SEA prevention efforts. However, there is more to be done. We urge a strong inter-agency approach to enhance and harmonize investigative capacities, to increase transparency, and to improve reporting mechanisms for allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by staff from the UN funds and programs.

Mr. Chairman,

Sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel is an issue that has been frequently discussed in other UN bodies and committees, but we must not forget that Member State responsibility is not limited to these discussions. Although we can, and must, show our commitment to the zero tolerance policy by empowering the Secretary-General, we must also take action ourselves whenever our nationals (civilian or military) are accused of these heinous acts. Member States must be more accountable, and more transparent, in their pursuit of justice for their nationals responsible for sexual exploitation and abuse. We must hold ourselves, as well as the UN, to the highest standards.

Thank you.

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