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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT
BY
MR. ELIAB TSEGAYE TAYE
SECOND SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF ETHIOPIA
AT
THE SIXTH COMMITTEE
ON
AGENDA ITEM 78
CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF UNITED NATIONS
OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS ON MISSION

72nd SESSION OF THE UNGA

06 OCTOBER, 2017

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, at the outset, to associate my delegation with the statements made on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation thanks the Secretary General for his reports on Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission.

The agenda item under discussion is of great importance to Ethiopia as it is one of the leading troop contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and host to several United Nation Offices, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia greatly values the sacrifices made by the United Nations peacekeepers and commends the contributions of United Nations officials and experts on mission in the implementation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. My delegation, however, would like to note with concern that crimes committed by a few of United Nations officials and experts on mission are having a detrimental effect on the fulfillment of mandates of the United Nations and tarnish the sacrifices and relentless efforts of most of the United Nations officials and experts on mission. Hence, it is of paramount importance to ensure that such criminal acts never go unpunished and that the perpetrators are prosecuted.

Ethiopia wishes to once again reiterate its full and unwavering commitment to the zero-tolerance policy of the Secretary-General on sexual exploitation and abuse; and urges the same to remain the guiding principle.

My delegation wishes to underscore that cooperation between States and the United Nations in investigating allegations of criminal conduct of United Nations officials and experts on mission is highly critical. We urge Member States to establish jurisdiction over crimes committed by their nationals while serving

as United Nations officials or experts on mission abroad, so that the existing legal gaps are eliminated and such crimes are not met with impunity and that justice is served. Member States shall also give assistance in criminal investigations and extradition proceedings.

This notwithstanding, however, we wish to take this opportunity to raise that allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse are extremely serious and they should be based on verifiable facts. But our own limited experiences have shown us that some of those allegations do not meet the minimum evidentiary standard. This is a matter that should be examined.

Mr. Chairman,

Ethiopia provides its peacekeepers with the necessary pre-deployment training including on sexual exploitation and abuse. We continue to exert efforts aimed at addressing possible risk factors which may lead to such cases and whenever we receive any report of sexual misconduct by our peacekeepers, we are determined to carry out the necessary investigation and take appropriate measure accordingly.

Furthermore, Ethiopian courts have jurisdiction over an Ethiopian official or expert on mission, who cannot be prosecuted at the place of commission of the crime due to the immunity that person enjoys. My Government is committed to take all appropriate measures to ensure accountability and that the perpetrators of such crimes are brought to justice.

As I conclude, **Mr. Chairman**, let me express my delegation's view that it would be important for the General Assembly to remain seized of the matter and for the Member States to continue to be informed of allegations of criminal activity or abuse by United Nations officials and experts on mission. The General Assembly is indeed the appropriate forum to discuss this matter and find a comprehensive solution to this problem.