



SIXTH COMMITTEE

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by

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Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on
Mission

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Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission

Mr. Chairperson,

Israel appreciates the continued efforts to promote accountability and ensure that serious crimes committed by United Nations Officials, Experts on Mission and members of Peacekeeping Forces, are not met with impunity. Israel also thanks the Secretary General for his recent reports on this matter.

While this agenda item evolved from serious allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers, today we are aware that unfortunately, this subject matter encompasses a broader scope of criminal action, including actions that result in loss of life and involvement in terror activity.

It is our joint duty to investigate and prosecute such crimes, in accordance with international human rights standards and general principles of criminal law, including due process and the rights of victims, without prejudice to the privileges and immunities of the United Nations under applicable international law. Israel urges States to take all necessary measures to develop legal and practical ways to strengthen the capacity of their national authorities to investigate and to prosecute such crimes in accordance with applicable international legal obligations. Israel continues to look forward to the development of national legislation and internal procedures addressing criminal activity and misconduct when these occur in UN missions.

Mr. Chairperson,

Member States' actions in this regard would be more effective if met with willingness by the United Nations to investigate allegations against UN bodies and UN personnel,

and to cooperate with the relevant authorities of the host State and with the authorities of the perpetrators' State of nationality.

Israel wishes to emphasize that privileges and immunities to which UN personnel may be entitled, are granted in the interest of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. Israel further stresses the right and duty of the Secretary General to waive immunity in any case in which the immunity would impede the course of justice and in which immunity can be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations.

Israel wishes to note that in cases where the Secretary General has concluded that immunity cannot be waived, it is an important as a complementary element, that UN authorities make efforts to reach solutions outside of domestic tribunals, such as *ex-gratia* compensation for victims and the undertaking of other appropriate voluntary steps in order to advance domestic public interest, especially in cases involving death or serious injury. Efforts should also be made to increase oversight and develop internal UN mechanisms for implementing disciplinary and punitive measures within the UN.

Mr. Chairperson,

Israel hopes that these mutual efforts will continue to raise awareness regarding the implementation of principles of proper conduct and crime prevention within the UN system.

In this respect, Israel is proud to be one of the co-founders to have recently established the *Group of Friends to Eliminate Sexual Harassment*, along with the Permanent Missions of France, Kenya and the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Israel was heartened by the dozens of participants who attended the Group's first meeting, recognizing their dedication to combatting sexual harassment in all forms, including in the workplace. We extend a warm invitation to any Member State who wishes to

exchange views and work together, along with the UN Secretariat, to advance this issue.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.