



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

ON

*"CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS ON
MISSION (AGENDA ITEM 79)"*

AT THE 73RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman

We thank you for giving us the floor to speak on this agenda item. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representatives of the Gambia and the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively.

My delegation would like to begin by appreciating the Secretary-General's report on this agenda item. Also, Nigeria takes note of the information contained in the reports that were submitted by member states on agenda items: A/73/128, A/73/129 and A/73/155.

Nigeria condemns acts of crime by UN Officials and continues to advocate that officials found culpable of such acts be held accountable. We strongly believe that UN Officials and Experts on Mission abroad are entrusted with the flag of the United Nations which they are obliged to uphold with a sense of duty and responsibility.

Mr. Chairman

Nigeria is engaged in sensitization visits to Missions abroad with special teams that interact with, and sensitize its troops on the consequences, implications and impacts that any untoward actions could have, not just on themselves and their families, but on the society, as well as the United Nations and Nigeria. We encourage more targeted orientation and awareness campaigns for officers on the risks of irresponsible behaviour and the United Nations' zero tolerance for such acts of indiscretion.

Nigeria commends the zero-tolerance policy of the UN concerning criminal conduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse, committed by UN personnel and Experts on Mission. Nigeria supports the current procedure that allows the Police to exercise authority over its erring nationals on UN Missions. My delegation also supports the idea to refer cases of alleged criminal conduct to the states of nationality of the official or expert on mission concerned, for investigation and possible

prosecution, and urge states to report to the Organization on steps taken thereafter. It is on record that Nigeria has taken appropriate legal actions against one of its officials alleged to have committed a crime while serving as UN personnel on Mission.

My delegation encourage states to take necessary steps to prosecute their nationals for any offence committed while on mission, if necessary by adapting their national legislation to guarantee that the jurisdiction would be exercised.

Mr. Chairman

The Nigerian government has embarked on the provision of recreational activities for Nigerian peacekeepers at missions abroad, to boost their morale. The government of Nigeria has also approved a proposal for granting regular leaves and passes for Nigerian peacekeepers to enable them visit their families.

My delegation also believes that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse should not be stigmatized; rather, they should be rehabilitated. The Nigerian government has made contributions to the United Nations Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Victims Compensation Fund, urging other member states to do same.

Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, Nigeria continues to advocate that Officers should be rewarded for exemplary behaviour to encourage others, while bad behaviour should be punished without hesitation. We should at all times be mindful of how ordinary people around the world are impacted positively by the work that UN Peacekeepers do, and must therefore work harder to ensure that no one is allowed to tarnish that.

I thank you for your attention.