



United Nations General Assembly | Sixth Committee

**Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission
(Agenda item 79)**

12 October 2021

(check against delivery)

Madam Chair,

Brazil would like to thank the Secretary General for the two reports submitted this year on criminal accountability of UN officials and experts on mission. They provide updated information about state practice and the policies and procedures of the UN entities to fight impunity. Moreover, they provide information on policies and procedures of the Secretariat, thus facilitating the identification of gaps and current challenges.

Brazil attaches great importance to the fight against impunity. The UN has to be above any suspicion in order to maintain its credibility and effectiveness on the ground. For years, UN officials and experts have been diligently performing their duties and pursuing the purposes and objectives of the Organization according to its Charter. The UN cannot allow that the misconduct of a few tarnishes the achievements and the reputation of the Organization.

There is a clear need to ensure proper accountability for all wrongdoings committed by UN officials and experts on mission. We owe it to the victims, whose right to justice should also be ensured, and we owe it to everyone who trusts the United Nations.

While significant progress has been made, Brazil subscribes the recommendation of the Secretary General to enhance the coherence and coordination of policies related to the reporting, investigation, referral and follow-up of credible crime allegations,

especially with regard to specialized agencies and organizations that fall outside the scope of GA resolutions.

We also encourage the UN system entities to continue the assessment of the adequacy of their existing policies and procedures. In this regard, we commend the fact that a number of Secretariat units and other entities reported that they have appointed a Conduct and Discipline Focal Point to provide advice and support on matters related to conduct and discipline.

At the same time, all Member States should strive to overcome remaining legal challenges to assert jurisdiction over crimes committed by their nationals when they serve as UN officials or experts on mission. Member States whose domestic law does not envisage extraterritorial jurisdiction should put in place mechanisms to promote domestic accountability for those crimes committed by their nationals abroad so that they do not go unpunished.

Cooperation between the UN and Member States is also of the essence, including the sharing of information and material for purposes of criminal proceedings initiated by States with jurisdiction.

Madam Chair,

Brazil expresses its serious concern over the instances of sexual violence, exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations reported by the Secretary General. It reiterates its support to the zero tolerance policy in the cases of sexual exploitation, abuse and other criminal conducts, while stressing the need for the strict observance of the rule of law.

Preventive and repressive measures should be combined to forestall these violations. It is particularly relevant to ensure that victims of crimes committed by UN officials and experts on mission receive adequate support and protection.

Brazil is proud of the overall track record of its peacekeepers in more than seven decades serving under the UN flag, and we have strict protocols in place to deal with any possible misconduct, including, if necessary, the criminal accountability of alleged perpetrators.

Brazil reiterates its steadfast support to measures aimed at fighting impunity for serious crimes, including those committed by United Nations officials and experts on mission.

As a recently elected Member of the Security Council for the term 2022-2023 and having amongst its priorities efficient peacekeeping and the promotion of human rights, Brazil considers that it is of paramount importance to ensure that credible allegations are properly investigated, perpetrators are brought to justice and victims find justice and redress.

I thank you.