

**Statement Delivered by Hanna Betachew Birhanu: on behalf of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia: 76<sup>th</sup> session of General Assembly: Sixth Committee: Agenda Item 79: Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission: 12 October 2021, New York**

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Thank You Madame Chairperson,

Let me start by expressing our appreciation to the Secretary General for his reports on the agenda item.

Madame chair, please also accept my delegation's appreciation for your great work in steering our meetings,

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Africa Group and the Non-Aligned Movement and I will make the following remarks in our national capacity.

**Madame Chairperson,**

Ethiopia, being one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions and a seat to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA) as well as several other regional organizations and UN agencies, it bears a dual obligation to ensure the criminal accountability of UN officials and experts on mission. On the one hand, we host a great number of UN personnel that do not fall within the jurisdiction of our law enforcement organs. On the other, we send out personnel with a similar

immunity to other host countries.

When it comes to Ethiopian personnel and blue helmets Ethiopia deploys to African Union, United Nations, and hybrid peacekeeping missions, we maintained strict adherence to the policy of "zero tolerance" for misconduct. We also avoided impunity, through our laws that assert jurisdiction over crimes committed by Ethiopian officials in places where they enjoy immunity.

In this regard, we would like to indicate the need for all nations to assume jurisdiction over crimes committed by their nationals that enjoy diplomatic immunity given to UN staff. We also would like to underscore the critical role of the UN in bringing-forth evidence and information on commission of crimes and in following up measures taken by countries of nationality.

**Madame Chairperson,**

We have noted the Secretary- General's report on measures to strengthen the coherence and coordination of policies and procedures in the UN and specialised agencies is encouraging.

Nevertheless, my delegation would like to flag the urgent need for the UN to strengthen its preventive and redress mechanisms against, favouritism, misappropriation of resources, use of functions for political objectives, open violation of the duty to maintain neutrality and impartiality, undue political declarations, unethical use and misuse of

conventional and social media, interference in the internal affairs of states and other forms of transgressions.

We see a great need for the United Nations to augmenting its internal investigation and accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, the UN shall strengthen its protection for whistleblowers and witnesses against retaliation or intimidation. Self-initiated evaluation of conduct, and accountability mechanisms are necessary if the UN is to build its body of staff with the requisite integrity and competence as provided under the UN Charter.

**Madame Chairperson,**

Finally, I would like to reiterate the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and host countries of UN agencies, as well as member states, in order to ensure that UN officials who violate their honorable responsibilities and the law of the host countries are held accountable for their transgressions.

Ethiopia will continue to make the necessary effort towards prevention of impunity in the criminal accountability of UN officials.

**Thank you.**