

**Statement at the 76th General Assembly Sixth Committee
Agenda Item 79: Criminal Accountability of UN Officials
and Experts on Mission**

**Elizabeth Grosso, Attorney Adviser
United States Mission to the United Nations
October 12, 2021**

Thank you, Chair.

We once again express our gratitude to the officials and experts on mission who perform the critical and sometimes dangerous work of the United Nations. We salute the high integrity with which the vast majority of these officials and experts conduct their work. We further appreciate the vigilance of the United Nations and Member States in protecting the credibility of the United Nations in carrying out this work. The United States remains firm in its belief that, on the rare occasion when UN officials and experts on mission commit crimes, they should be held to account.

We thank the Secretary General for the two reports issued on criminal accountability in advance of these meetings. These documents include reporting on several promising developments, including the FAO's new internal policy for referring credible allegations of serious crimes to national authorities; IAEA's new anti-fraud and whistleblower policies; UNHCR's new policy on a victim-centered approach in response to sexual misconduct; and UNDP's new standard operating procedure on the use of the clear check database. We also appreciate the appointment of a focal point for conduct and discipline at UN-Habitat, as well as IOM's appointment of a new senior coordinator for prevention of, and response to, sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

The United States notes that, despite great efforts by the United Nations Secretariat, the various UN missions and specialized agencies, UN personnel continue to be accused of sexual exploitation and abuse with some regularity. In this reporting cycle, several UN agencies addressed new policies and personnel to facilitate the prevention and response to SEA. We urge continued vigilance to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse across the UN System, as it is critical to UN credibility.

Thank you, Chair.