

Statement by Ms. Moon Young KIM (Adviser)

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea

Criminal Accountability of the United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission (Agenda Item 74)

Sixth Committee, 77th Session of the UNGA

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Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair,

At the outset, my delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports (A/77/225, 237) on "Criminal Accountability of the United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission," which provide a solid basis for our discussions. Furthermore, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation that Member States should continue to encourage the distinct legislative bodies of the UN system and related organizations to help to ensure the coherence and coordination of policies and procedures relating to the reporting, investigation, referral and follow-up of credible allegations revealing that a crime may have been committed by personnel of such agencies and organizations who fall outside the scope of the General Assembly resolutions, with policies and procedures related to UN officials and experts on mission.

While my delegation commends the invaluable contribution of UN officials and experts towards the fulfillment of the mandate of the UN, we firmly believe that any criminal activity by persons abusing their status as UN officials or experts and their privileges and immunities simply cannot be tolerated.

Such activities not only tarnish the reputation and credibility of the UN, but could also seriously jeopardize the operations of the missions as they are likely to discourage the local authorities

and communities from cooperating with the UN.

As such, crimes committed by UN officials and experts should not go unpunished. The State of nationality should take all appropriate measures, including (1) establishing the relevant jurisdiction to ensure that perpetrators of such crimes are brought to justice, (2) investigating and prosecuting alleged crimes in a timely manner, and (3) cooperating with the UN and appropriate national authorities to effectively address this serious problem, as well as the protection of victims and witnesses in the process. However, we would like to underline that the exercise of jurisdiction should be without prejudice to the privileges and immunities that are provided to the UN personnel pursuant to the relevant international laws.

Among the various types of crimes, sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel is particularly deplorable as it victimizes the same vulnerable groups that UN personnel are meant to serve and protect. In this regard, we reaffirm our full support for the zero-tolerance policy of the UN on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN officials and experts.

Mr./Madam Chair,

While ending impunity is important in terms of delivering justice to victims, my delegation would also like to highlight the significance of the prevention of crimes through practical pre-deployment training, vetting measures and induction training. As a troop-contributing country to peacekeeping missions, the Republic of Korea provides an intensive training course for those who are to be deployed. They are selected through a rigorous process among many eligible military personnel and are given instructions in the necessary professional ethics standards.

In this context, my delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General

for his efforts to strengthen existing measures through technical enhancement, including the use of the ClearCheck database to record sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.

Lastly, my delegation is of the view that it is time to renew our collective resolve to ensure criminal accountability and ultimately prevent all crimes by UN officials and experts on mission. We look forward to continued engagement on this important topic.

Thank you. /End/