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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

**ANDUALEM YALELET, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA**

AT

**THE 77TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
UNDER AGENDA ITEM 74
“CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS
AND EXPERTS ON MISSION”**

**6 OCTOBER 2022
NEW YORK**

Mr. Chairperson,

My delegation expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission in document A/77/237.

Ethiopia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Nigeria on behalf of the Africa Group, respectively and would like to make the following remarks in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

Ethiopia strongly condemns the substantiated criminal allegations committed by the United Nations officials and experts on mission as presented in the report, especially the allegation on sexual exploitation and abuse.

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 one hand, we host a great number of UN personnel that do not fall within the jurisdiction of our law enforcement organs and other, we send out personnel with a similar immunity to other host countries.

When it comes to Ethiopian personnel under the African Union peace keeping and those deployed under the blue helmet, including in hybrid peacekeeping missions, Ethiopia maintains strict adherence to the policy of "zero tolerance" for misconduct. We are also committed to avoid impunity, through our laws that assert jurisdiction over crimes committed by Ethiopian personnel in places where they enjoy immunity. It is critical 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.

Mr. Chairperson,

Rule of law on diplomatic privilege and immunity is necessary to maintain the credibility of the United Nations. This requires strict adherence to the laws of host countries by the UN officials and personnel. We have taken note of in the Secretary-General's report on measures undertaken by some specialized agencies and related organizations during the reporting period in insuring the criminal accountability of their officials and staff members. Moreover, we have also taken note in the secretary General report of measures to strengthen the coherence and coordination of policies and procedures in the UN and specialized agencies. These are all encouraging. While recognizing these measures, my delegation would like to flag the urgent need for the UN to strengthen its preventive and redress mechanisms against, favoritism, 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, sexual exploitation and abuse and other forms of transgressions.

Regarding mitigating grave offenses, the importance of establishing preventive mechanism is critical, contributing states of peacekeeping troops and the United Nations have a major role in making sure the personnel and officials have the necessary training and personality that befits their role as protectors and role models. To this end, we need to make sure that the screening mechanism put in place is effective.

Mr. Chairperson

We see a great need for the United Nations to augmenting its internal investigation and accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, the UN needs to 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.

Mr. Chairperson,

Finally, I would like to reiterate the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and host countries of UN agencies, 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 and is committed to make the necessary effort to make the zero-tolerance policy of the United Nations achieve its objective.

I thank you.