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STATEMENT DELIVERED

BY

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MINISTER-COUNSELLOR AND LEGAL ADVISER

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**AGENDA ITEM OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY SIXTH COMMITTEE ENTITLED  
“CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS  
AND EXPERTS ON MISSION (AGENDA ITEM 76)**

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10<sup>th</sup> October, 2023  
Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNHQ  
New York

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Uganda and the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively.

At the outset, allow me to reiterate the importance Ghana attaches to the question of criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. We thank the Secretary General for his report contained in document A/78/248.

As a long-standing troop contributing country of United Nations Peacekeeping Missions, Ghana values the indispensable contributions of peacekeepers and experts to the realization of the mandates of this organization for international peace and security and other objectives of the Charter.

While acknowledging the dedication and sacrifice of peacekeeping personnel, we also note with much concern, persisting reports of corruption, fraud, theft and other serious human rights violations as sexual abuse and exploitation. Such misconduct and criminal actions committed against the very people requiring

protection, obscure the function of United Nations peacekeeping operations, taint the reputation of the Organization and undermines its integrity and credibility.

United Nations staff, especially those entrusted with the duty of peacekeeping and creating the conditions of lasting peace and stability in conflict affected areas, are obligated to conduct themselves with the highest standards of integrity.

We, therefore, reaffirm our support for the system-wide approach to prevent and ensure accountability for criminal offences committed by United Nations officials and experts on missions. While immunity is necessary for the effective discharge of duties by United Nations personnel, we stress that it must not enable impunity when it has been established that a criminal offence has occurred.

Once again, we reaffirm Ghana's strong support for the United Nations Zero-Tolerance Policy against sexual abuse and exploitation and urge strict observance of the policy by all staff in particular, officials and experts on mission.

**Mr. Chairman,**

My delegation concurs with the view that ensuring criminal accountability of United Nations personnel and experts on mission and securing justice for victims must be a shared responsibility of the Member States and the United Nations. In that respect, we encourage close cooperation on investigations of criminal offenses, extradition processes, prosecution and measures for the protection of witnesses where necessary.

To close existing jurisdictional gaps, we also encourage Member States to adopt at the national level, regulations and policies that allow for the prosecution of their nationals found culpable of criminal offenses while in the service of the United Nations.

My delegation has in previous sessions expounded the rules and regulations of the Ghana Armed Forces which provide the legal basis for competent jurisdiction over its men cited in criminal offenses during peacekeeping operations. We take this opportunity to reiterate our country's unwavering commitment to take all appropriate measures to ensure accountability on the part of Ghanaian nationals on missions.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Lastly, we emphasize the importance of prevention as a crucial measure to avoid impunity and affirm our support for measures outlined in Chapter VIII of the Secretary-General's report concerning the strengthening of existing pre-deployment, training and vetting measures. We also look forward to reports on the scaling up of the reinforcement training package following its successful piloting.

We believe that the distinctive blue beret of the United Nations must continue to inspire confidence and the hope of peace in every place they are deployed. We therefore look forward to continuing discussions on this issue with the view to enhancing our collective capacities to ensure effective accountability for criminal offences committed by personnel and experts on mission to avoid impunity.

**I thank you.**