

Statement by Second Secretary, Ms. Rabia Ijaz, Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations delivered in the Sixth Committee General Debate on the Agenda Item 76 “Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on Mission”

10 October 2023

Mr. Chair,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

2. We thank the Secretary-General for his two reports, A/78/257 and A/78/248.

3. These reports offer up-to-date insights into the practices and policies adopted by individual states and UN entities in their efforts to combat impunity. In addition, they shed light on the policies and procedures of the Secretariat, thereby making it easier to identify existing shortcomings and current hurdles.

Mr. Chair,

4. The question of criminal accountability for United Nations officials and mission experts holds paramount significance. This is because it is closely tied to the reputation of the United Nations as an organization. The UN plays a crucial role in upholding peace, security, and the rule of law, and it is essential that it models these principles in its own operations.

5. As a major troop contributing country, Pakistan fully subscribes to the UN's zero-tolerance policy regarding any crimes perpetrated by UN officials and mission experts. Our personnel have consistently upheld the highest levels of professionalism and conduct. We continue to be dedicated to enforcing strict discipline in any instances of reported misconduct.

6. Pakistan was among the pioneering countries to sign the UN's voluntary compact to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse. Moreover, we have created training modules that have become an integral

part of the mandatory courses required for the career advancement of our officials. We are open to sharing our training methodologies with the Secretariat and other member states.

Mr. Chair,

7. While there is no dispute among States concerning the need to ensure that United Nations officials and experts on mission who commit criminal offences are held accountable for their actions, our collective efforts have been falling short because of several factors:

- **First**, As recommended by the Secretary-General, it is imperative to boost the coherence and coordination of policies concerning the reporting, investigation, referral, and follow-up of credible criminal allegations. This is particularly crucial for specialized agencies and organizations that operate beyond the purview of General Assembly resolutions.
- **Second**, the system for referring cases to Member States needs to be strengthened. As evidenced in the Secretary-General's report, most follow-up information requests from Member States go unanswered. It's crucial to refine the referral mechanism, leveraging best practices and lessons learned for sharing information about alleged misconduct by their nationals.
- **Third**, the issue of accountability for UN officials and mission experts is comprehensive and multifaceted. Although sexual exploitation and abuse represent the most egregious forms of misconduct, the scope of criminal accountability for these individuals extends much further. As confirmed by the Secretary General's latest report, most reported cases involve financial impropriety and fraud. Therefore, it's essential not to narrow our perspective on this matter.
- **Fourth**, the imperative to address jurisdictional gaps, remains equally compelling. While we note that divergent viewpoints exist on a comprehensive international legal framework on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, we are, nonetheless, reassured that with a view to bridge these differences, the ongoing discussions within the framework of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee would continue.

8. In conclusion, Mr. Chair, Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering commitment to initiatives aimed at combating impunity for serious crimes, including those perpetrated by UN officials and mission experts.

9. It's crucial to ensure that credible allegations are thoroughly investigated, wrongdoers are held accountable, and victims receive justice and redress. This is key to upholding the values that drive the work of the United Nations.

I thank you.
