



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT

BY

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FIRST SECRETARY

AT THE

**SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

ON AGENDA ITEM 76

**“CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF UNITED NATIONS
OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS ON MISSION”**

New York,

October 14, 2024

Check Against Delivery

Chair,

1. The Delegation of Sierra Leone aligns this statement with the statements delivered by the Distinguished Representative of Republic of Uganda on behalf of the African Group and the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.
2. We thank the Secretary-General for reports **A/79/185 and A/79/189** and note their contents.
3. We extend our appreciation to the UN officials and experts for upholding their duties with courage and integrity, despite challenging circumstances. Regrettably, we also note the existence of unacceptable criminal conduct and behaviour, for which accountability is critical for global confidence and trust in our Organization.
4. Respect for the unique culture, traditions, norms, and circumstances of host countries is highly crucial and pivotal in ensuring that the mandate to protect and safeguard is

effectively implemented. Therefore, we reiterate the strong need for the necessary capacity and sensitivity training of these personnel from inception, during missions, and at the wrap-up/end of the mandate.

5. **In this connection**, we applaud the thorough training and assessment UN personnel undergo to ensure they adhere to the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, and good behavior.

6. My delegation, therefore, commends the Member States and international organizations who have contributed to these efforts. We further commend the cooperation between States, the UN, its specialized agencies, and bodies.

Chair,

7. In this debate, Sierra Leone will make the following points:

At the international level, the laudable step by the Secretary-General, pursuant to the GA resolution, **A/78/102** to establish, coordinate, and streamline relevant policies and procedures incorporated by the Secretariat, specialized agencies, and all other relevant entities to address misconduct of their officials is fully supported by my delegation.

8. **We support the goal of systematically aligning, coordinating, and streamlining these policies and procedures.** We especially appreciate the Secretary-General's directive on addressing retaliation following reports of misconduct, as we believe it promotes a trusting environment, free from intimidation, and contributes to a healthy workplace that combats impunity.

9. On the two main areas of **misconduct, corruption/fraud and sexual exploitation/abuse**, significant issues of

eradicating sexual exploitation and abuse, Sierra Leone echoes the **“no compromise”** and the comprehensive approach to criminal accountability. We amplify the call for zero tolerance, fully supporting the **“zero tolerance policy”** on sexual exploitation and abuse throughout the UN system in order to put an end to impunity.

10. We commend the World Food Program (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNIDO, and WHO for revising their **policy on sexual exploitation and abuse**. This initiative enables a progressive outlook on these policies and makes them fit for purpose in the ever-evolving workspace. We also appreciate the **victim-centered approach** that underlines the newly developed policy of the FAO and WHO. We call for a similar step within the Organization and its bodies and agencies.

11. Additionally, the alleged cases of rape, sexual exploitation, and abuse of minors are **deeply concerning**. Women, children, and the disabled are the most vulnerable, especially during and after conflicts, and therefore need proper protection and support. We hope these cases are thoroughly investigated and justice is served.

12. At the national level, we continue to strengthen our legislative and policy initiatives to end **SGBV and bring perpetrators to justice**. As a troop-contributing country, we continue to provide SGBV training to our police and military personnel for their deployment and interactions with host countries and maintain the highest standard of professionalism and integrity.

13. To ensure accountability for SGBV, especially sexual exploitation and abuse, my delegation will closely monitor

the implementation of UN General Assembly resolution A/76/304, focusing on international cooperation on access to justice, remedies, and assistance for survivors of sexual violence.

14. Additionally, we commend the ongoing efforts to eliminate corruption, fraud, theft, and misappropriation. There has been a doubling of cases referred to national authorities for credible allegations of fraud, corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, and misconduct, which doubled from 11 cases last year to 25 cases. **The consistent upward trend in corruption and fraud is concerning.**

15. **At the national level**, regarding corruption and fraud, my delegation continues to actively enforce zero tolerance for corruption, fraud, and misappropriation at all levels and across public, civil, and government institutions. Our **Anti-Corruption Commission** is active and progressive in addressing corruption within the country. We also partner

with regional and international organizations to share best practices and exchange views on eradicating corruption.

Chair,

16. We reiterate our position and express our continued support for the State of nationality to have precedence over the host country on the issue of criminal accountability of UN officials and experts on mission. We commend the continued cooperation between the host state, the state of nationality, and the organization's efforts to maintain this synergy and referral mechanism, and we urge all states to ensure compliance.

17. **In conclusion**, Mr. Chair, we reiterate our request for support in **capacity building, legal and mutual assistance, and strong cooperation among host countries**, the UN and its organizations, contributing states, and all relevant

stakeholders to address the criminal accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on missions.

I thank you for your attention.

