



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement**

**By**

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**Minister**  
**Permanent Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations**

**On**

**Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and  
Experts on Mission: Agenda Item 76**

**15 October 2024**

**Mr. Chair**

My delegation aligns itself with the Statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of the Uganda on behalf of African Group and the Distinguished representative of Iran for the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

2. My delegation would begin by appreciating the Secretary General for his report on Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission as contained in A/79/185 and A/79/189 and commends the United Nations for all the efforts made since the introduction of this agenda item. We take note of the report and all the actions taken and welcome the continuous emphasis on Zero tolerance on crimes committed by UN officials and Experts on mission.

3. We also express appreciation to the UN Officials and Experts for their sacrifices and dedication to the essential, but the most difficult work of the United Nations around the world. However, we wish to reiterate that these group of personnel need to conduct themselves professionally when at field in distinguishing themselves in the discharge of their duties and shun any act of indecorous of international personnel. The ethics and code of conduct of their profession must always be observed in the field as they are not immune from being held accountable for their criminal activities.

**Mr. Chair**

4. Nigeria has consistently played a leading role in peacekeeping efforts globally and regionally since the 1960s. Our peacekeepers have been deployed to conflict zones in Congo, Liberia, Sudan, Mali, Haiti, and beyond under the UN

umbrella and other regional and subregional bodies, symbolizing commitment, bravery, and dedication to global peace. This proud history underscores our steadfast belief that those entrusted with maintaining peace must be held to the highest accountability standards. However, while we celebrate the sacrifices made by UN personnel, we must reiterate that these individuals, whether military or civilian, must conduct themselves professionally and with the utmost respect for the laws governing their responsibilities. Any form of misconduct or improper behaviour by UN officials, experts, or peacekeepers, regardless of their rank or mission, is unacceptable. As Nigeria has consistently affirmed, no one is immune from being held accountable for their actions in the field.

5. Criminal accountability must be applied uniformly. We reject any forms of partiality or double standards in treating offences committed by UN personnel. Nigeria believes civilian and military peacekeepers must be equally accountable for crimes or misconduct. National authorities must have the responsibility and capacity to ensure that their personnel are prosecuted for violations committed during their missions. Perpetrators of crimes, particularly those involving sexual exploitation and abuse, should face the full weight of justice, with no room for impunity.

6. We welcome and support any resolutions encouraging States Parties to introduce measures that would ensure that United Nations Officials and Experts who violate the laws guiding their duties are held accountable, we are still reaffirming our position today that perpetrators of crimes against humanity

should not go scot-free. We strongly believe that national authorities of any erring personnel should be able to hold their nationals accountable for crimes committed.

**Mr. Chair**

7. To maintain professionalism and ethical standards, United Nations Officials and Experts should undergo comprehensive pre-deployment training with emphasis on sexual exploitation and abuse as well as other misconduct in the field. This training should not be limited to military peacekeepers alone. Perpetrators of heinous crimes must be punished to serve as deterrence to others. UN officials and non-staff personnel should not, by their action or behaviour turn the UN into an ethically-challenged institution.

8. Nigeria strongly believes in measures that would enhance discipline among United Nations staff on Mission. We have noted that regular training remains one of the best ways of regulating the activities of the UN staff on Missions. This is why all Nigerian peacekeepers are provided with aide memoire to re-emphasize good conducts during deployment. We encourage all member states to also adopt such practices.

9. My delegation wishes to reiterate Nigeria's zero tolerance policy regarding criminal activities. Corruption and fraud should not be condoned under any guise. Such serious crimes have detrimental and negative effects on the image, credibility, and integrity of the United Nations. Nigeria, therefore, welcomes all measures necessary that would ensure sanity among UN officials and experts.

10. To checkmate such activities, Nigeria in its capacity as one of the leading Troops contributing countries (TTC'S), visited Missions abroad with Special Teams that interact with, and sensitize our troops on the consequences, implications, and impacts that errant actions could have on officials, their country, as well as the United Nations. We encourage more targeted orientation and awareness campaigns for officers on the risks of irresponsible behavior and the United Nations' complete disapproval of such acts of indiscretion.

**Mr. Chair**

11. Nigeria remains committed to contributing towards collective efforts to exterminate atrocities being committed by the representatives of the world body such as the United Nations. Nigeria commends the zero-tolerance policy especially on sexual exploitation and abuse. We call on all UN member states to ensure that the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse are not stigmatized. Rather, they should be rehabilitated. In this regard, Nigeria would continue to support the United Nations Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Victims Compensation Fund.

12. Finally, Nigeria recommends that the UN put mechanisms in place to address issues relating to perpetration of crimes against humanity in all ramifications, as we re-affirm Nigeria's commitment to the maintenance of global peace and stability.

Thank you for your attention.