

Tuesday, 14 May 2013

Agenda item 146 – Report of the Secretary-General on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (A/67/766)- Introduction by Ms Ruth de Miranda, Chief, Human Resources Policy Service, Office of Human Resources Management, Department of Management

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (A/67/766). The report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 57/306, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to maintain data on investigations into sexual exploitation and related offences.

The present report provides data on allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel, covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2012. The report details information in three main areas:

- (i) The number and type of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse received in 2012;
- (ii) The status of the investigations into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse; and,
- (iii) The initiatives undertaken to enforce the United Nations' standards of conduct related to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Overall, the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse has decreased. For 2012, allegations totalled 88, compared with 102 allegations reported in 2011. This represents a reduction of 14 percent. The number of allegations relating to peacekeeping personnel for the same period has fallen significantly: from 74 in 2011 to 60 cases, reflecting a reduction of 19 percent for this category of personnel. This is the first year in which the number of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving military personnel is lower than those involving civilian personnel in field missions.

The general decline in numbers may be attributed to the successful collaborative efforts between Member States and the Organization, in terms of preventive measures, awareness-raising and training. There have been continued efforts on improving communication and cooperation with Member States. This is reflected in part by the continued increase in response from Member States to formal referrals for action from the Secretariat, in particular on requests for investigations to be conducted by troop-contributing countries, reflecting the awareness of Member States of their responsibilities with these matters. Nonetheless, challenges remain.

Despite the decrease in numbers of allegations, continued instances of sexual exploitation and abuse, and the prevalence of the most egregious forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, highlights the need for continued effort and resolve. The present report further describes a programme of action comprising enhanced measures and activities being undertaken that focus on three aspects: ensuring the credibility of the Organization's response through increased transparency and cooperation; strengthening governance, oversight and enforcement to achieve greater accountability; and enhancing awareness and advocacy towards more responsive protection and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished delegates,

While noting the downward trend of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, even one case is one too many. I would like to re-emphasize the Secretary-General's continued commitment to preventing the perpetration of acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.