

**General Assembly
67th Session**

12 October 2012

Sixth Committee

**Agenda Item: Criminal accountability of United Nations
officials and experts on missions**

**Ms. Anniken Enersen
Counsellor/ Legal Affairs**

Mr. Chairman,

Norway has emphasised the importance of this topic on several previous occasions. We welcome the report of the Secretary-General *A/67/213*, and the reported efforts undertaken by States to establish jurisdiction over crimes and cooperate in the exchange of information to facilitate investigations and prosecutions.

Serious crimes committed by United Nations personnel, including sexual exploitation and abuse, challenge the very essence of what the UN stands for. They represent a danger to the organisation's integrity and undermine the trust and support the UN enjoys. As a result, such crimes harm the UN's ability to fulfil its important responsibilities. Thus, Norway fully supports the zero-tolerance policy towards crimes committed by UN personnel.

Mr. Chairman,

While training and awareness-raising are necessary, Norway would also like to reiterate the importance of accountability and reparation when crimes occur despite training being provided to

prevent this. Our view on this issue remains unchanged. It is of utmost importance that the criminal accountability of UN personnel is properly addressed both in individual cases and on a broader scale by the UN.

The UN umbrella should not be misused as a shield for unlawful conduct by personnel on UN missions or as a cover for criminal conduct. Sexual exploitation and abuse and other criminal acts committed by UN personnel should be investigated and duly prosecuted. In our view, one case of impunity is one case too many.

Mr. Chairman,

It follows from this that Norway supports further action being taken, both at the international level and nationally, as appropriate. The low number of cases reported should not be used as justification for maintaining the legal status quo.

First and foremost, Norway calls on States to establish jurisdiction over serious crimes committed by their nationals while serving as members of a UN mission. Norway supports the development of an internationally legally binding convention to ensure that criminal conduct is addressed. The importance of cooperation must also be stressed. In this regard we refer to the General Assembly resolutions which offer several concrete recommendations with regard to strengthening such cooperation. Cooperation in this field is undoubtedly affected by domestic law, but current domestic law in some jurisdictions cannot serve as a justification for refraining from cooperating as recommended in these resolutions. Thus, we strongly urge all states to cooperate with each other and with the UN when allegations of serious crimes are reported.

Thank you.