



SIXTH COMMITTEE

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Statement by

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Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on  
Mission

Agenda Item 76

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Mr. Chairperson,

The ongoing discussion on criminal accountability of United Nations officials, experts on mission and members of Peacekeeping Forces, is key to preventing impunity and safeguarding the credibility of the United Nations on an institutional level. In this respect, Israel welcomes General Assembly Resolution 73/196, and thanks the Secretary General for his recent reports on the matter.

Israel notes that while this agenda item originated as a response to serious allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers, this subject today has taken on a much broader scope, and addresses criminal actions ranging from involvement in terrorist activity to acts that result in the loss of life. It is Israel's position that such actions, committed by United Nations officials and experts on mission, must be properly investigated *and prosecuted*.

It is Israel's view that measures should be taken to ensure that the zero-tolerance policy for all criminal activities – including sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption, as well as involvement in terrorist activity - be applied to all levels of UN officials and experts on mission. Israel wishes to emphasize the importance of transparency, and the expectation that the results of internal UN investigations of its personnel be made public. Naturally, this is of particular importance to the Member State in the territory of which the crimes were committed.

In this regard, Israel welcomes the ongoing investigation conducted by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding recent allegations of various acts of misconduct by senior UNRWA officials. Such types of behavior, if true, threaten to sully the reputation of the UN as a whole, and to undermine its ability to carry out its work. Therefore, it is important that the UN ensure that, if proven guilty, such officials be held accountable for their misconduct.

Mr. Chairperson,

As envisaged by both the UN Charter and by the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, we must remember that privileges and immunities,

to which UN personnel may be entitled, are granted in the interest of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. In addition, Israel stresses the right and duty of the Secretary General to waive immunity in any case where the immunity would impede the course of justice and in which immunity could be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations.

In this regard, Israel wishes to note that in cases in which UN personnel are entitled to immunity from jurisdiction, the UN authorities should make efforts to reach solutions beyond the courtroom or tribunals, such as the grant of *ex-gratia* compensation to victims, or the undertaking of other appropriate voluntary steps in order to advance public interest at the domestic level, especially in cases involving the loss of life or serious injury. Furthermore, efforts should be made to increase oversight and to develop internal UN mechanisms for implementing disciplinary and punitive measures within the UN.

Mr. Chairperson,

Israel believes that international cooperation serves as the cornerstone for preventing impunity and for promoting accountability. Israel urges States to take all necessary measures to develop formal legal and other, practical ways to strengthen the capacities of their national authorities to investigate and to prosecute such crimes in conformity with applicable international legal obligations.

I thank you, Mr. Chairperson,