

Statement by
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On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement
Before the Sixth Committee
75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
on Agenda Item 77:
“Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission”
New York, 12 October 2020

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Non-Aligned Movement takes note of the Report of the secretary general, contained in documents A/75/228 on implementation of General Assembly Resolution, 74/181 which contains information on the policies and procedures of the United Nations Secretariat, funds and programmes and other entities regarding credible allegations that reveal that a crime may have been committed by United Nations officials or experts on mission as well as recommendation to help to ensure that such policies and procedures are coherent, systematic and coordinated throughout the United Nations system.

Particularly we take note of the recommendation that the United Nations system entities should continue to utilize their internal networks to measure the adequacy of their existing policies and procedures and to identify potential disparities, as well as to promote enhanced cooperation on cross-cutting issues, such as financial recovery and request the Secretary- General to continue to improve reporting methods by providing a full picture of obstacles in the United Nations, as well as any practical problems in implementations of the General Assembly resolutions on Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission, with the aim of developing appropriate policy and legal solutions in this committee.

As we have expressed on previous occasions, the Non-Aligned Movement attaches great importance to the issue of Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission. As we speak, NAM Countries contribute more than 80% of the peace-keeping personnel in the field. The NAM Member Countries are the major recipients of these peace-keeping missions, at the same time.

The Non-Aligned Movement expresses its appreciation for the outstanding contributions and sacrifices of U.N. peacekeepers. The Movement stresses, however, that all UN peacekeeping

personnel should continue to perform their duties in a manner that preserves the image, credibility, impartiality, and integrity of the United Nations. The NAM emphasizes the importance of maintaining a policy of zero tolerance in addressing all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeeping personnel.

The Non-Aligned Movement takes note of the work undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee in the framework of a working group on the criminal accountability of the United Nations officials and experts on mission during its three sessions held in 2007, 2008 and 2012. It is more than one decade that the topic Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission was put on the agenda of the Sixth Committee and UN has taken important and timely steps since then, but there is still a long way to reach an ideal situation.

The NAM underlines the need to enhance international cooperation to ensure the criminal accountability of the United Nations officials and experts on missions. We urge the United Nations to continue cooperating with States exercising jurisdiction in order to provide them, within the framework of the relevant rules of international law and agreements governing activities of the United Nations, with information and material for purposes of criminal proceedings initiated by States;

In this sense, we take note of the comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel, which was adopted by the General Assembly resolution 62/214. This Strategy will help to mitigate the sufferings of the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse as well as offer social support, legal services and medical attention, among other things. It is also important that the victims of criminal conduct perpetrated by United Nations officials and experts on mission are made aware of available victim support programs.

We also believe that the full implementation by all Member States of General Assembly resolution 74/181 as well as previous General assembly resolutions adopted pertaining Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission could contribute to bridging any jurisdictional gaps, if they exist and will strengthen accountability mechanisms and contribute

to guaranteeing due process with respect to investigations of acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. Moreover, the development of harmonized United Nations standards of investigation of crimes allegedly committed by United Nations officials and expert on mission can be critical to strengthening the United Nations system of accountability.

We encourage member states to exercise their jurisdiction in applicable cases in order to ensure that criminal acts do not go unpunished. It is crucial that the state of nationality acts in a timely manner to investigate and prosecute alleged crimes. We also call upon all states to provide information to the United Nations on any such referrals. Subsequently, an assessment can be undertaken to explore if there is any need for further measures by the General Assembly.

The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates its concern with respect to all alleged crimes on the part of United Nations officials and experts on mission, including allegations of fraud, corruption and other financial crimes, and in that regard welcomes the reaffirmation by the Secretary-General that there will be no tolerance for any corruption at the United Nations; the movement Urges the Secretary-General to continue to ensure that his zero-tolerance policy for criminal activities, such as sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption, is made known to all United Nations officials and experts on mission at all levels, especially those in managerial positions;

We strongly urge States to take all appropriate measures to ensure that alleged crimes by United Nations officials and experts on mission do not go unpunished and that the perpetrators of such crimes are brought to justice.

The NAM reiterates that it is still premature to discuss a draft convention on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. We believe that for the time being the work of the Committee must focus on substantive matters and leave matters of form for a subsequent stage.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.