

**Statement by Pakistan on Agenda Item 77**  
**“Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission**

(12 October 2021)

**Madam Chair,**

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Iran on behalf of the NAM.

2. We thank the Secretary General for his two reports, A/76/205 and A/76/208 alongside its annexures.

**Madam Chair,**

3. This agenda item continues to remain relevant and crucial for deliberation in the Sixth Committee as it strongly relates to the fundamental principles of the rule of law and affirms that impunity has no place in our world.

4. The UN officials and experts deployed in Missions bear the solemn responsibility to uphold the Charter principles, and thus, the image, credibility, and integrity of the organization itself. Any allegation of wrongdoing against these individuals should be duly investigated in a transparent manner. It is also critical that allegations are proven beyond reasonable doubts prior to subjecting the concerned official or expert to appropriate disciplinary actions. On this score, the Member States have the responsibility to extend due cooperation to the United Nations with respect to their nationals against whom such allegations are made.

5. While there is no dispute among States concerning the need to ensure that United Nations officials and experts on mission who commit criminal offences are held accountable for their actions, our collective efforts to that end are falling short because of several reasons:

- **Firstly**, cohesion and consistency of policy and practice across the UN system, especially when UN specialized agencies and related organizations are independent international organizations, with policies and procedures of their own, and are not subject to the authority of the Secretary General. While we understand this functional independence, the need for a more

streamlined and coordinated approach within the UN system cannot be over-emphasized.

- **Two**, the issue of accountability of UN officials and experts on mission is cross-cutting and multifaceted in its nature. While sexual exploitation and abuse is the most vile and heinous expression of abuse, ‘criminal accountability’ of UN officials and experts on mission has a much broader scope – in fact, as the latest report of the Secretary General affirms, a majority of reported cases relate to financial impropriety and fraud. Any tendency to view this issue from a specifically narrow perspective should be avoided.
- **Three**, the system for the referral of cases to Member States needs to be strengthened. It was clear from the table contained in the annex to the Secretary-General’s report (A/76/208) that, in the majority of cases, no response was received from Member States to follow-up requests for information. The allegations in those cases should not be left unaddressed. Although action was taken by Member States in only 10 of 67 cases referred to them in 2021 and 2021, that still represented some progress in comparison to previous years. The momentum should be sustained by drawing on best practices and lessons learned with regard to the sharing of information with Member States on wrongful acts allegedly committed by their nationals.
- **Four**, the imperative to address jurisdictional gaps, remains equally compelling. While we note that divergent viewpoints exist on a comprehensive international legal framework on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, we are, nonetheless, reassured that with a view to bridge these differences, the ongoing discussions within the framework of the Working Group of the Sixth Committee would continue.
- **Five**, legal gaps, including gaps in jurisdiction, should not be allowed to impede the course of justice. Technical assistance and support could strengthen the capacity of national institutions and criminal justice systems to bring perpetrators to account.

6. Pakistan fully subscribes to the UN’s zero tolerance policy for crimes committed by UN officials and experts on Mission. Our personnel have always displayed the highest

standards of professionalism and conduct. We remain committed to enforce strict discipline, in any cases of reported misconduct.

7. Pakistan was among the first batch of countries to sign the UN's voluntary compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse. Prime Minister Imran Khan is also a member of the circle of leadership against sexual exploitation and abuse.

8. We reaffirm the importance of pre-deployment training of UN officials and experts on Mission. We have developed training modules that form part of the curricula for mandatory courses in respect for human rights and protection of civilians. These efforts are in sync with the UN's own initiatives to strengthen conduct and discipline across all entities of the Secretariat. We stand ready to share our experience with the Secretariat and the wider membership.

9. To conclude Madam Chair, we reiterate Pakistan's unwavering commitment to upholding the image, integrity and credibility of the UN as an organization. To that end, we would like to assure of our full cooperation to the United Nations to ensure implementation of relevant assembly resolutions on the criminal accountability of the UN officials and experts on Missions.

**I thank you.**