

Australia unreservedly condemns sexual exploitation and abuse. Such behaviour by UN personnel exploits the vulnerability of the people they have been sent to help; it undermines the legitimacy of the UN and it disrespects the vast majority of UN personnel who serve honourably. Any allegations of exploitation and abuse need to be investigated, and any criminal acts brought to justice.

We acknowledge the efforts made in recent years to address this problem, including: the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution authorising the repatriation of troops and police from countries that fail to hold perpetrators to account; the establishment of a trust fund to help provide medical, psychosocial and legal services to victims; and the establishment of a website which publishes all allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation and actions taken in response.

Most recently, Secretary-General Guterres appointed the first UN Victims' Rights Advocate, Jane Connors, which is another welcome development.

For our part, Australia is pleased to join the Circle of Leadership and to sign the Voluntary Compact on sexual exploitation and abuse. These steps are a demonstration of our commitment to assist the UN to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. We are also intending to provide a financial contribution to the trust fund for victims mentioned above.

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