



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

By

Mr. Thomas Ramopoulos, Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to
the United Nations

at the Sixth Committee

on the Agenda item 7:

"Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on
mission"

United Nations

New York

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±CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY ±

Mr. /Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Monaco align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his latest reports on this topic (A/79/185 and A/79/189) and for his steadfast commitment to preventing and fighting impunity for crimes committed by UN officials and experts on mission. The European Union and its Member States subscribe fully to this demand that all personnel serving under the UN flag uphold the highest standards of integrity. There can be no tolerance for misconduct and crimes committed by UN personnel on mission, especially sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

United Nations officials and experts on mission are the face of the UN on the ground. They represent its values working at great personal risk at times in order to achieve its goals. We acknowledge and commend them for their efforts. However, there can be no excuse for acts of misconduct. Even isolated acts of misconduct can cause suffering on people, including colleagues, undermine trust in the UN by local authorities and the host population, and more broadly affect profoundly the reputation and credibility of the UN.

A comprehensive zero-tolerance policy must start from robust prevention while ensuring investigation and prosecution of misconduct and crimes. Lastly, we must protect and support victims, witnesses and whistleblowers.

Mr. /Madam Chair,

The EU has adopted a zero-tolerance policy toward misconduct and crimes including sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination by its civilian and military personnel in Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. More specifically, the Code of Conduct and Discipline for EU Civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Missions requires all mission members to maintain the highest personal standards of ethical behaviour, impartiality and integrity and to act in an irreproachable manner at all times. It

North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

further provides for the reporting of possible breaches of the code, investigation and

UN personnel on mission under international law risk leading to impunity, waivers may be sought. This is in line with the rationale for these privileges and immunities, which are granted in the interest of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. At the same time, we reiterate the importance of cooperation, including through the exchange of information and coordination between the host State and other States, to ensure successful investigation and prosecution of alleged misconduct and crimes.

Next to prevention and investigation and prosecution, we must not lose sight of the need to protect, including from retaliation, and support victims and witnesses as well as whistle blowers. Measures must be in place to encourage them to come forward and speak up. This is support victims and witnesses.