

**GENERAL DEBATE AT 2006 SESSION OF UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS (C-34)
27 - 28 FEBRUARY 2006, UN Headquarters, New York**

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The 2006 C-34 session began with a 2-day General Debate during which member states addressed the committee on key issues in peacekeeping.

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guehenno opened the General Debate with a statement reviewing developments in peacekeeping in 2005, and outlining the main challenges and priorities for Peacekeeping Operations in the coming years. One of the issues highlighted was progress made in the development of mechanisms to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping personnel.

The need to eradicate sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions was a running theme throughout the general debate, with states commending measures taken to combat this problem, including: the establishment of conduct and discipline teams at UN Headquarters and in peacekeeping missions, the development of a revised model Memorandum of Understanding between Troop Contributors and the UN as well as a Comprehensive Strategy to assist victims of sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeeping personnel.

Few states highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming in this context, but a number of states made general references to issues of gender in peacekeeping, including steps to increase women's participation in peace operations. Below are excerpts from countries' statements on gender and sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping.

References to Gender

Fiji

Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security

Security Council Resolution 1325 calls inter alia for:

1. Increased women participation in conflict resolution and peace processing
2. Appointment of women as SG's Special Representatives. Member states to provide names of women capable of holding the jobs for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster.
3. Expand role of women in UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) as military observers, civilian policemen, in Human Rights, and humanitarian personnel
4. Special measures on women and children during armed conflict
5. Respect refugee camps
6. During disarmament –differentiate between male and female ex-combatants

Towards this end, we ask for the inclusion of dedicated gender training expertise in the ITS and for the strengthened capacity in field mission training cells, including the systematic collaboration with gender advisers. We urge fellow troop contributing countries to use or strengthen gender sensitivity training resources, for national pre-deployment preparation. Fiji now conducts gender specific recruitment drive both for the military and police forces. The cost of conducting women training in an environment long dominated by males can be expensive as some infrastructures and logistical support functions have to be duplicated. Recently more than 300 girls turned up for military recruitment; unfortunately we had to disappoint 250 of them as we only had 50 places available. Surges in interests of women and girls in this area promise brighter days for gender mainstreaming and the realization of requirements of Security Council resolution 1325.

Gender sensitive training will not obviate the continuous need for women participation in peacekeeping operations. We all come from nations with different cultural backgrounds, different religions and different levels of development but one thing common among us is that we give our women a special place in our societies. This special place can be blurred in countries emerging from conflicts as pressing needs will indicate changing priorities. It is our contention that only a woman can fully appreciate and empathize with another woman who may have nothing left but her pride and instinct for survival. We therefore believe that the role of women in peacekeeping operations and peacemaking processes is not only crucial but their physical presence a dire necessity.

Guyana (on behalf of the Rio Group)

The Rio Group notes that reference to gender mainstreaming appears in the Addendum to the report, but is surprised to meet that the goal of gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping operations is not included among the priorities outlined in the report itself. In light of the concern expressed by Member States regarding sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations, it is more important than ever that gender-mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations is accorded due priority. In addition to being a tool for the empowerment of local women and girls, gender-mainstreaming is an important tool for changing the “boys will be boys” culture within the missions themselves.

India

Mr. Chairman, in response to the Secretary-General’s call for increased representation of female personnel in field missions, we are contributing lady military and police officers to a number of UN Missions. We have recently pledged to send a full Female Formed Police Unit to UN Mission in Liberia (UNIMIL). This also reflects India’s commitment to assist the UN in reaching out to the most vulnerable sections, i.e. women and children, in conflict and post-conflict societies.

Kazakhstan

We note with satisfaction that the growing understanding in the recent years of the place and role of women in peacemaking and peacekeeping. Thus, an enhanced role of women

in the area of peacekeeping and security and ending violence against women is a priority for UNIFEM and other interested bodies of the United Nations. In 2005, the United Nations Security Council devoted a meeting to a review of the implementation of the Council resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security. The delegations repeatedly indicated that women's involvement in making decision regarding security and in peace processes had a very positive effect on peaceful resolution of conflicts and post-conflict peacemaking.

Kyrgyzstan

(Statement not available)

According to a UN press release the Kyrgyz representative argued that peacekeeping operations should reflect a better gender balance and women should participate at all levels in peacekeeping, including at the managing level. (See: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/gapk188.doc.htm>)

Malaysia

We also attach importance to the need to enhance gender perspective in the peacekeeping activities and their potential role in preventing sexual exploitation and abuses and all its related aspects. We therefore look forward for the policy dialogue between DPKO and TCC to review strategies for enhancing gender balance among uniformed personnel in peacekeeping operations.

Namibia

At the initiative of Namibia, the Security Council held an open debate on Women and Peace and Security, which culminated in the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We did so because of our strong conviction that women can play an important role, as equal partners, in conflict prevention and in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this connection, Namibia has always deployed women as Milobs, staff officers, contingent members and civilian police officers in the United Nations peacekeeping operations. We are therefore encouraged and welcome the fact that DPKO is organizing a workshop on 28-29th March 2006, to discuss the participation of women in peacekeeping operations.

New Zealand (on behalf of the CANZ group)

[W]e welcome DPKO's focus on establishing procedures for gender mainstreaming throughout the Department's operations, including through the impending Seminar, for implementing the elements of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) as this will also assist in our struggle to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse.

Norway

Norway welcomes the Swedish proposal for the UN to add civilian observers to its instruments available for peace missions. This is an interesting idea that merits further consideration. This would broaden the recruitment base and make a better gender balance

in the UN missions more achievable. At the same time we fully agree that there are many questions that need to be addressed before we can make a final decision. We therefore support the Swedish proposal for an expert meeting to review political, legal and practical implications.

We still have a long way to go to ensure women's involvement in conflict resolution in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Together with the UK, the Netherlands and the DPKO, Norway has organized missions to selected peace operations to examine the implementation of 1325 in the field. We have offered to finance a study for the DPKO on lessons learned and best practices regarding how effective implementation of a gender perspective can contribute to the success of a peace mission.

On International Women's Day the Norwegian government will launch a national action plan on the implementation of 1325. Copies will be distributed to all UN missions, as we believe that many of the elements of the plan will be relevant for all UN member states.

References to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Algeria

Regarding professional ethics and the conduct of personnel, we take this opportunity to renew our firm condemnation of all acts of sexual abuse and exploitation perpetrated by a small minority within some peacekeeping missions but that could discredit the excellent work carried out by peacekeeping operations personnel. The creation of Conduct and Discipline Teams in the headquarters as well as in eight field missions is an experiment that the headquarters should carefully examine to make sure that functions and resources are not duplicated. This experiment should be extended to all peacekeeping missions.

However, it is clear that in order for the zero tolerance policy to be efficient, we have to take action at all levels, including at the member State level: we have to break the silence that surrounds these issues by leading vigorous investigations and by taking severe disciplinary action against the culprits. We must also take action to inculcate the knowledge of the code of conduct in effect in the missions' personnel and to make it sensitive to these issues. The establishment of training sessions on aimed at preventing that type of behavior is a commendable initiative and we would like the attendance to these sessions to be mandatory for missions' personnel and, most importantly, in member States before the personnel is deployed.

[WILPF translation – original in French]

Bangladesh

We believe that success of peacekeeping operation is hinged upon its image, credibility and integrity. We have extended our firm support to the Secretary-General's policy of 'zero tolerance' in dealing with the case of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) as well as other forms of abuse.

Brazil

Positive changes also took place as regards to procedures to address sexual exploitation and abuse. In those cases which judicial proceedings become necessary, the alleged offender should be immediately repatriated to their countries of origin in order to face these proceedings. It is also essential that commanders, in all ranks, be prepared to perform the actions required to prevent misconduct. Brazil shares the view that the incorporation of standards of conduct for peacekeepers into a memorandum of understanding is a positive step to this end, provided that troop contributing countries retain exclusive jurisdiction over their contingents.

Burkina Faso

The Session is taking place at a time when a number of sexual abuses have been committed on the scene of peacekeeping operations. We are very satisfied with the Secretariat's vigorous measures whose goal is not only to end this situation, but also to make light of the facts. We encourage the Conduct and Discipline team and, given its results, we are determined to support any project aimed at making it a permanent body.

[WILPF translation – original in French]

Cameroon

My delegation reaffirms its firm condemnation of the acts of exploitation and sexual abuse committed within the UN's peacekeeping missions. I renew my delegation's adherence to the Secretary General's zero tolerance policy for such heinous acts that affect the United Nations' honorable image. We must continue to fight them vigorously.

To this end, it is wise to take preventive action by training the contingents and informing the local populations as well as by putting in place a normative and dissuasive framework. Based on Prince ZEID AL HUSSEIN's excellent report (A/59/19), my delegation encourages the Secretariat to continue the current actions and reflection in conjunction with the States providing contingents and the head of missions in order to reduce this scourge as much as possible, if not to permanently eradicate it.

[WILPF translation – original in French]

Ethiopia

Ethiopia considers preventing, combating and eradicating sexual abuse as an area of urgent concern. Accordingly we welcome the creation of permanent multidisciplinary conduct and discipline units both in headquarters and field missions. While we strongly support the strengthening of these units, we would also like to emphasize the need to enhance the specialized capacity of the Office of Oversight Services. This is especially important to avoid the risk of backlog and delays in investigating allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse which can have a damaging effect on the victims, the individuals being investigated and the reputation of troop contributors.

European Union

From the beginning the EU has supported the strong stance taken by the SG on this issue of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. We strongly reiterate the need to ensure that victims of sexual exploitation and abuse are brought to justice. All steps taken by the Secretariat to-date, such as the work on revised Memorandum of Understanding for Troop Contributors, on the concept for establishing a professional and independent investigative capacity in the OIOS and on the Victims Assistance Policy are highly welcome.

Likewise, we strongly support the establishment of a sufficient number of Conduct and Discipline teams to meet the need for such a capacity in missions and favors the transformations of the present HQ-team into permanent Conduct and Discipline Unit in the DPKO, as proposed by the SG.

Fiji

Informal briefing held during the year on the Stand by Police Capacity, Strategic Reserve, the Joint Operation Center (JOC)/Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC), enhanced rapidly deployable capacities, sexual exploitation and abuse, rule of law, integrated disarmament, demobilization and integration standards, gender mainstreaming, enhancement of African peacekeeping and presentations on the recent report of the Office of International Oversight Services were, to my delegation, positive initiatives by the Secretariat towards the realization of the overall UN peacekeeping reform.

(...)

Fiji acknowledges the progress made to address and eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse. We are disheartened however, to note the Secretary General's admission that not all managers, commanders and personnel are vigorously pursuing the UN zero tolerance policy. Fiji undertakes to employ its efforts towards the observance of this multilateral policy in line with the spirit embedded in the widely distributed model MOU and will invoke all appropriate legal mechanism to address breaches should it surface.

Ghana

Aligned to this issue is the issue of accountability. Since contingent commanders are to be held responsible for the misconduct of their troops, especially respecting Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, it is only fair that responsibility for misappropriation and malpractices should not be limited to the perpetrators, but extended to senior official in supervisory positions.

Mr. Chairman,

On misconduct, let me commend the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the remedial measures adopted to redeem the UN's image blighted by scandal over Sexual Exploitation and Abuse perpetrated by a few shameless individuals. In pursuing these measures, it is our hope that the role of the Conduct and Discipline Teams would be extended to cover the remaining missions. We look forward to the recommendations of

the Group of Legal Experts on the criminal accountability of UN staff and experts on missions, and we also call on the Secretary-General to consider the appointment of legal experts on the remaining issues as a matter of priority.

While in favor of the interim measures on victim support, my delegation calls on the Secretariat to expedite action on the proposed comprehensive policy. It is also pertinent that the outcome of investigations are communicated, since justice delayed is justice denied.

Guinea

On the topic of sexual abuse and exploitation, my delegation is very pleased about the main progress attained, particularly through the efforts towards making the personnel more sensitive and putting into practice the measures called for by the Secretary General's report ST/SGB/2003/13. This document argues that the elaboration and application of a zero tolerance policy for sexual violence and exploitation committed within the United Nations' peacekeeping operations as well as the revised version of the memorandum stating the agreement between the UN and the States providing peacekeeping personnel will contribute to eradicate this problem.

Besides the current measures and the ones that are being considered, it is desirable that the United Nations and the States providing peacekeeping personnel—in particular the States whose officers are implicated in the abuse—continue to work together at the juridical level in order to finalize the procedures within an acceptable timeframe and to allow each party—victims and accused—to be aware of the conclusions.

[WILPF translation – original in French]

India

As regards the sensitive and delicate issue of conduct and discipline, we are convinced that sexual exploitation and abuse are totally unacceptable forms behavior. We fully support the establishment and the implementation of a policy of zero tolerance and note the work done by DPKO in the past year on raising the awareness of those with managerial and command responsibility; establishing standards of conduct, training in terms of a multi-cultural, pluralistic and tolerant outlook is as important as subsequent swift punitive action, once culpability is established.

In the context of focusing on issues of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations by the General Assembly, we support the NAM Chairman in resisting the effort by the Security Council to encroach on an issue that clearly falls within the functions and powers of the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies. We would urge the C-34 to continue taking the lead on issues relating to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Indonesia

On a subject related to personnel, let me also comment on the issue of misconduct and sexual abuses of some peacekeeper last year. On this sad chapter, the Special Committee

has already considered the report of the Special Adviser of the Secretary General entitled, 'A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations.'

My delegation considers it essential that the momentum generated by Prince Zeid's report on gross misconduct be maintained. Workable and effective initiatives must be pursued with vigor and determination. We wish to reiterate the support of my country for the National Investigation Officer concept and a methodology for strong, direct and transparent action, ensuring adherence to national judicial process. In this respect, it is imperative that early advice is given to a Member State where an allegation has been made involving any of its personnel. My delegation looks forward to concluding work on the model Memorandum of Understanding, noting that it would then be used as a guide to enable Member States and the United Nations to agree an MOU or other arrangements that enshrines the model MOU principles and also meets national requirements. We also support the idea of a permanent, integrated conduct and discipline unit in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to coordinate and focus on this issue.

Japan

On the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, which was discussed in the Security Council last week, we should make all efforts to solve these issues promptly. Discussions on the model MOU and the victim assistance policy are expected to take place in the session of the Special Committee, and Japan intends to participate proactively in those discussions.

A total of five such meetings [of the Working Group] were held last year. Among them, we would like to highlight one meeting on MONUC, which focused on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, with the participation of the chair of this Special Committee as well as the representatives of major troop-contributing countries. We assure you that Japan will remain committed to this endeavor to further promote interaction between the Working Group and troop-contributing countries.

Jordan

Turning to Sexual Abuse and Abuse in UN peacekeeping operations, we would like to express our gratitude to the Secretariat for including an annex in the Security-General's report on the achievements registered thus far on this important subject. My delegation looks forward to the conclusion of both the revised model MOU and the NIO (national investigation officers) concept, as well to the receipt of the comprehensive strategy on victims, and the receipt in the Sixth Committee of work of the group of legal experts. We also believe it necessary for the C-34 to re-examine the issue of in-mission court-martials. Specifically, we believe the C-34 should encourage those countries that are able to conduct their court-martials in the mission area, to in fact do so. The C-34 should agree on modalities toward that end, in line with the recommendations found in last year's comprehensive strategy on SEA.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by the peacekeeping personnel upon civilians should be regarded as an obvious violation of human rights. We are of the view that these kinds of human rights violation continue in 21st century because the sex slave crimes committed by Japanese army in the past century have not been completely liquidated.

Therefore, it is necessary to take practical measures to punish the recent crimes in peacekeeping operations but also make Japan be called to account and liquidate the past crimes and its consequences. Republic of Korea

Last year, we were embarrassed by reports of sexual abuse by UN peacekeeping personnel in the field. We have deep concerns over these reprehensible acts. It is all the more distressing because the victims and their families were already suffering from the pains of war and economic hardship. While my delegation commends the Secretariat for its efforts since then, such as the installation of conduct discipline teams and the revision of model MOU, we should not expect that these measures alone will prevent the recurrence of such misdeeds. Continuous joint efforts by the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries are essential to eradicate this problem.

Malawi

Malawi strongly and dutifully supports the zero tolerance policy of the United Nations on sexual exploitation and abuse. We have been training our personnel on the crucial prevention strategies that they must adhere to at all times. We fully support the efforts generated by the Secretary-General Adviser's report and believe the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the newly established field conduct and discipline teams present the way forward.

Malaysia

A negative issue in the recent years has been the regrettable cases of sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations. However, progress has been made in this area on account of the report by Prince Zeid, as was stressed by Undersecretary-General Guéhnno in his presentation.

My delegation joins others to strongly condemn the act of sexual exploitation and abuse by military, civilian police and civilian peacekeeping personnel. Such act of gross misconduct is a smudge on the good name of the military, civilian police and civilian personnel and has tarnished the reputation and the credibility of the Department in managing United Nations peacekeeping missions. My delegation supports a zero tolerance policy on this issue and encourages the Department to remain engaged and take all the necessary measures to enforce it. It is encouraging to note that significant progress has been made by the Secretariat and Member States submitted through a comprehensive analysis of the problem and report as contained in document A/59/710.

Morocco on behalf of Non-Aligned Movement

We wholeheartedly support the United Nation's policy of zero tolerance. To fulfill this commitment, NAM welcomed the comprehensive report on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeeping personnel, prepared by the Secretary-General's Adviser, and is fully engaged towards ensuring the implementation of those recommendations made by the Special Committee in its resumed session in April 2005, which fall within the Member States' responsibilities.

NAM takes note of the continuing efforts of the Secretariat to ensure the implementation of the measures adopted in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. With regard to the establishment of a comprehensive strategy for welfare and recreation, a victim assistance policy, procedures for investigation on allegations of abuse, NAM emphasizes that close consultations should prevail between Member States and the Secretariat in this regard. So as to ensure that their views are fully taken into account.

NAM would like to express its appreciation for the setting up of a full time capacity responsible for conduct and discipline issues in the Headquarter as well as in various missions. Nevertheless, the transformation of the current Headquarter team into a permanent Conduct and Discipline Unit in the DPKO, as proposed by the Secretary-General, requires to be further considered in order to assess its impact in the oversight of conduct and discipline issues.

Namibia

The past few years have been hunted by ugly allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeepers, both civilian and military. These allegations tainted the good image of peacekeeping and what it stands for. However, due to the cooperation of troop and police contributing countries and their commitment to a zero tolerance call, these cases were immediately dealt with.

Nepal

My delegation fully supports the zero tolerance policy of the United Nations on sexual exploitation and abuse by the peacekeepers. We have been working hand in hand with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations right from the very beginning to make this policy effective. The Royal Nepalese Army has taken legal action against peacekeepers who have been found guilty of sexual exploitation and abuse. His Majesty's Government of Nepal is determined to bring the perpetrators of such offence to justice and is committed to pursue the policy of zero tolerance in the days ahead as well. While we have to ensure that the perpetrators of sexual offence should no way escape from justice, there is also a need that no peacekeeper, who is not involved in wrongdoing, should be victimized by virtue of false accusation. It is equally important that a peacekeeper, who has fallen victim of a false accusation, should be compensated and due process of the law should be fully respected.

New Zealand (on behalf of the CANZ group)

[W]e see two major areas of focus for our comments today. First is the need for member

states to implement the initiatives welcomed by world leaders during the World Leaders Summit and second is the need to implement the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and bring to fruition the suite of helpful initiatives currently being developed.

(...)

We welcome the efforts made by the Secretary General and DPKO to implement measures to address sexual exploitation and abuse problems however remain extremely concerned that major problems still exist in a number of Missions. We call on all TTCs to ensure that all personnel deployed on UN peace operations be appropriately trained and be held to the highest standards of conduct and discipline. We wish to register our very strong concern that the problem appears not to have diminished in the field during the past year, in spite of the attention given to this issue. We continue our united support to all actions taken by DPKO to alter the apparent continuing cultural acceptance of this appalling behaviour by a small minority.

Nigeria

It is also appropriate for me to address an issue which has generated a lot of interest within and outside the United Nations: sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping missions. For avoidance of doubt, the Nigerian Government reiterates that it fully subscribes to, supports and endorses the zero tolerance policy of the United Nations on sexual exploitation and abuse. We have devoted considerably more time and scarce resources to training and reorientation of our military and police personnel deployed to peacekeeping missions because of our support for that policy. Mindful of the pressures under which all United Nations peacekeepers operate, we have continued to improve on the welfare and the provision of facilities for our personnel including in the areas of recreation, restitution and reunion for troops at their leisure. We have demonstrated our repugnance to the few and isolated cases of indiscipline and misconduct identified by us or brought to our attention, by responding swiftly through prompt repatriation, investigation and prosecution of implicated personnel. It is disturbing, however, that soon after such repatriations and with attendant negative publicity some of these allegations have turned out to be unsubstantiated. Regrettably, investigations on the part of the United Nations have been rather slow whilst communication of the outcome of such investigations have not matched the urgency and gravity attached to these allegations. Indeed, in several cases, it would seem that the allegations were motivated by duplicity and other considerations.

Nigeria is equally concerned that the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse have regrettably become, in the hands of some members of the United Nations, a vehicle for denigrating specific Member States. In the process, perhaps unwittingly, they have thrown into doubt the continued interest of troops contributing countries (TTCs) in contributing troops, and thereby eroded confidence in the United Nations peacekeeping operations as a whole. This attitude does a great disservice to the thousands of courageous and committed personnel, who by responding to the call from their

Governments for service under the United Nations blue berets have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate a singular attachment to the ideals of the United Nations. We should reject such undeserved attack on these fine officers and men. Let us call an end to these ill-conceived efforts informed by desires to settle political scores or discredit the United Nations.

I should add that in the interest of justice and fairness, the United Nations, on its part, should through its procedures, ensure not only the guilty are punished but also the credibility of any mission is sustained when the dignity of those cleared of such grave allegations is re-instated. That way, committed peacekeepers would not regret their service and the moral authority of the United Nations would be enhanced.

Norway

We regret the fact that sexual exploitation and abuse requires our continued attention. At the same time we would like to commend the Secretariat for the measures that have been implemented so far. Norway welcomes the recent establishment of a permanent integrated conduct and discipline unit in the DPKO. We note with concern the Secretary-General's observation that not all managers and commanders are vigorously pursuing the UN's zero tolerance policy. This is a clear signal that must continue to look for ways to approve leadership accountability.

Philippines

The Philippines places particular importance to the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations mission areas. We therefore endorse the action of full-fledged Conduct and Discipline Units in New York and in the field. The recommendations of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for TCC's on this issue should be given serious considerations.

Russia

Acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as other forms of ignominious behavior of peacekeepers, undermine confidence in the UN. This misconduct must not go unpunished.

Last year, the Special Committee made recommendations to address the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse. Those recommendations gave a necessary political impetus to vitalize the UN activity in this area. Now we hope to work out specific measures to contain this ulcer. And what we need is now is a concerted effort of experts, which can bring long-term results.

We appreciate the draft documents prepared by the Secretariat that contain many elements of Zero-tolerance strategy on the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse – a revised Model Memorandum of understanding, an OIOS' document on investigations and a Code of conduct based on existing regulations in this area.

Rwanda

On the question of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse we would like to make the following points: Firstly, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse represents perhaps the worst possible betrayal of the trust bestowed on peacekeepers by the populations they are entrusted to protect. It also besmirches the name of the United Nations and all its Member States. The problem must therefore be dealt with firmly and decisively. We therefore welcome the zero tolerance policy and the range of measures intended to address the problem.

Secondly, we consider it logical that Commanders and Managers in the field be held to account for misconduct and indiscipline among their subordinates, especially if such misconduct is known to them and persistent.

Thirdly, we heard from the statements of some delegations yesterday that there is a possibility that this issue might be used unjustly to tarnish the reputation of individual TTCs or to settle old scores. It is essential that the principles of due process be respected, and that the concerned TTCs are provided full information, in a timely manner, about the allegations against their nationals and results of any investigations.

Singapore

On the serious matter of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, we would like to see greater accountability at the senior level to arrest this problem. We are concerned that these abuses have been going on without censure for a long time. The fact that such acts were allowed to continue begs the question as to who should be held responsible for this. Transgressors must be dealt with swiftly and consistently. We welcome the establishment of the Conduct and Discipline teams. But my delegation is of the view that the exact work and procedures may not be fully understood by many on the ground. The effectiveness of these teams in arresting the SEA problem must be measured and rationalized with the work of the Gender Advisers and the Child Protection Advisers in the field missions, to ensure optimization of limited resources. In addition, we are concerned that several investigations are still pending. Unless we have the appropriate investigative capacity, we will be ineffective in combating this problem.

(...)

[I]t is tragic to still hear of reports and allegations of sexual abuse and misconduct by some individuals. The Secretary-General himself has admitted that although progress had been made to eliminate exploitation and abuse, ‘not all managers, commanders and personnel are vigorously pursuing the United Nations zero-tolerance policy’. This is a moral outrage. People in war-torn lands see blue helmets and expect their lives to improve. This “hope” is the single greatest compliment that they pay to the DPKO. It arises from the DPKO’s reputation for effectiveness and strong record of achievement. So when there is sexual abuse, it is a total betrayal of trust.

Tanzania

We have noted diligent efforts being undertaken in peacekeeping reform measures designed to stamp out misconduct in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse; (...)

We especially commend the Committee's recommendation (A/59/19/Rev.1) that was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its Resolution 59/300 recommending, among other things, the setting up of Conduct and Discipline Teams (CDT) at both the DPKO Headquarters and in all field missions as a response to the increased allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation.

We strongly condemn any acts of misconduct and support fully the implementation of the zero tolerance policy geared at restoring the credibility of the blue helmets.