



## UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**United States Statement**  
**UN General Assembly Sixth Committee – October 2009**  
**Criminal Accountability of United Nations Officials and Experts on Mission**  
**Agenda Item 78**  
**Statement by Mary McLeod, Legal Adviser**

Mr. Chairman:

The United States appreciates the General Assembly's continued interest in this issue. We strongly believe that UN officials and experts on mission should be held accountable for the crimes they commit. We look forward to working with Member States and the United Nations on efforts in that regard.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report on Criminal Accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, that includes the information provided by some governments on the extent to which they have domestic jurisdiction over crimes of a serious nature committed by their nationals while serving as UN officials or experts on mission. We also appreciate the information submitted by certain governments concerning their cooperation with the United Nations in the exchange of information and the facilitation of investigations and prosecutions of such individuals. We look forward to learning about efforts undertaken by other governments in that regard.

We commend the United Nations on its efforts to address this important issue, including, in particular, its continued efforts to train UN peacekeepers on proscribed activity for such personnel, with an emphasis on current rules, guidance and procedures relevant to conduct and discipline. We also appreciate the UN's efforts to refer credible allegations against UN officials and experts on mission to the State of the alleged offender's nationality during the July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 reporting period. We urge States to which individuals were repatriated during that period to take appropriate action with regard to those individuals and report to the United Nations on the disposition of the cases. States must play a key role in curbing abuses. All UN Member States stand to benefit from the Secretariat's reporting on efforts taken by States to investigate and prosecute referred cases.

The United States looks forward to more in-depth discussion during the meetings of this Committee of practical steps we as Member States or the UN Secretariat might take to address this serious problem.

Finally, with respect to the outstanding issue of the possible negotiation of a multilateral convention on criminal accountability of UN staff and experts on mission, we continue to question whether negotiation of such a convention would present the most efficient or effective means through which to ensure accountability. A convention that merely closes theoretical gaps in jurisdiction may not significantly contribute to addressing the crimes at issue, particularly if the impediments to accountability lie elsewhere. We urge States to redouble their efforts to develop practical ways to address the underlying causes of such impediments.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.