

Compact between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Government of [MEMBER STATE]: Commitment to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse

The United Nations and its Member States perform critical work through operations on the ground to maintain peace and security, address humanitarian needs, promote and protect human rights and contribute to sustainable development. Together, we commit to protect the weak, aid those in need, uphold the dignity of every human being and serve the cause of peace.

The United Nations recognizes the importance of the support of your Government to United Nations operations on the ground by, *inter alia*, contributing personnel to peace operations and special political missions, making financial contributions to peace, development or humanitarian operations, or through bilateral support to other Member States.

We recognize that the standards of conduct for uniformed personnel that have been adopted by the United Nations and its Member States, in relation to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, should be equally adopted by non-United Nations forces deployed under a Security Council mandate.

The United Nations promotes full human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all, and promotes women's active, full and equal political, social and economic participation, including in all conflict prevention and resolution, justice and security sector processes, as well as in wider development activities.

We are deeply concerned by ongoing reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel and non-United Nations personnel deployed under a Security Council mandate. We will not allow such behavior, which exploits the vulnerable and destroys lives, to sully our reputation, diminish our contributions or undermine our values.

We affirm the following principles to underscore our united efforts to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse:

1. The United Nations Charter is the foundation for the activities of the Organization and the conduct of the personnel who serve under its flag. Integrity is the cornerstone of service in the United Nations, based on respect for human rights and dignity.
2. Our shared values demand that those who accept the privilege to support United Nations operations on the ground serve as trust-building agents and ensure that this trust is not eroded through acts of sexual exploitation and abuse.
3. Sexual exploitation and abuse runs counter to our common values, and we will take all possible measures to uphold the right of every person to be free from sexual exploitation and abuse, without discrimination.
4. We will promote a culture of professionalism and pride of service, work actively to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and, should such acts occur, demand accountability from our leaders, managers and commanders, and any individual who violates our fundamental values.
5. Where acts of sexual exploitation and abuse occur, the victim and his/her rights and dignity will be at the centre of our efforts and concern; the victim will be empowered and provided access to timely and effective assistance, and access to administrative and judicial processes and remedies.

We re-affirm our commitment to fully implement these principles and undertake the following concrete actions, as applicable to the relevant categories of personnel serving in operations on the ground.

A. On behalf of the United Nations, the Secretary-General commits to:

Support and assistance to victims:

- (i) Strengthen measures to provide timely and comprehensive assistance to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- (ii) Appoint a Victims' Rights Advocate at Headquarters and Victims' Rights Advocates in selected field missions to coordinate the United Nations system-wide strategic vision for victim assistance, protection and support, including measures to facilitate support to victims in gaining access to justice and effective remedies.
- (iii) Facilitate the collection, preservation and transmission of DNA evidence in response to requests for assistance in filing a paternity or child support claim, in line with internationally recognized chain of custody principles.

Efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse:

- (iv) Foster and encourage capacity-building and learning on ways to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse, including by facilitating bilateral cooperation on best practices.
- (v) Ensure that systems are in place to vet incoming personnel against a history of prior sexual exploitation and abuse while serving with the United Nations.
- (vi) Engage with Member States to further develop mechanisms for preparing mid-level and senior leaders, including commanders of troop and police-contributing countries, for service in United Nations operations on the ground.
- (vii) Ensure continuing training for all categories and levels of personnel on United Nations values, standards and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.
- (viii) Promote gender balance and women's empowerment in host countries in line with our mandate and in our own institutions, including through strengthened outreach efforts, as part of a strategy to achieve gender parity in the United Nations and to address the root causes that can give rise to sexual violence.

Accountability Measures:

- (ix) Support the capacity-building of National Investigation Officers.
- (x) Support greater quality and consistency in investigations by all investigative entities through the development of harmonized standards of investigation.
- (xi) Take measures to conduct child and victim-sensitive investigations.
- (xii) Continue to work together with Member States in their efforts to ensure that existing obstacles to the imposition of disciplinary measures and/or the criminal prosecution for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by their nationals are removed, including through any necessary legislative reform.

- (xiii) Continue to cooperate with the appropriate authorities of Member States to facilitate the proper administration of justice in respect of credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, in accordance with the applicable legal framework.
- (xiv) Review and propose changes to the rules governing the award of the United Nations medal to strengthen pride in United Nations operations.
- (xv) Explore modalities to recognize excellence in leadership in conduct and discipline.
- (xvi) Identify and launch a systematic mechanism to share and disseminate Member States' best practices and lessons learned with regard to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

B. The Government of [MEMBER STATE] acting in accordance with its national law and its international law obligations commits to:

Support and assistance to victims:

- (i) Cooperate with the United Nations in its efforts and activities related to victim protection, assistance and support, including by cooperating with the Victims' Rights Advocate.
- (ii) Appoint domestic focal points, to facilitate addressing and processing claims of paternity and child support against their nationals directly with victims and their legal representatives, and to collaborate with the United Nations on these cases.

Efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse:

- (iii) Take steps to ensure that personnel nominated or provided to serve with the United Nations are screened, in keeping with the Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel.
- (iv) Formally certify that uniformed personnel have not been previously repatriated on disciplinary grounds or otherwise barred from participation in current or future United Nations missions in connection with an act of serious misconduct.
- (v) Provide robust pre-deployment training to their personnel on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and provide the United Nations with the required certifications regarding personnel to be deployed.
- (vi) Engage with the United Nations to further develop mechanisms for professional development of uniformed personnel, particularly commanders.
- (vii) Aim to deploy commanders with prior peacekeeping experience or with the requisite knowledge, skills and experience to exercise command in peacekeeping operations, and require them to develop specific plans and programmes for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse while deployed in line with relevant United Nations standards and policies
- (viii) Cooperate bilaterally with Member States to support their service to United Nations operations on the ground in line with United Nations standards of conduct.
- (ix) Identify and implement measures to ensure adequate living and working conditions of personnel, particularly those deployed in remote locations.

- (x) Promote gender balance and women's empowerment as part of a strategy to achieve gender parity in the personnel serving with the United Nations and to address the root causes that can give rise to sexual violence.

Accountability Measures:

- (xi) Ensure that investigations by National Investigation Officers into alleged sexual exploitation and abuse are conducted in accordance with the highest standards of independence, impartiality, thoroughness, timeliness and transparency.
- (xii) Ensure that National Investigation Officers have sufficient experience or expertise to adhere to relevant rules and procedures that would enable criminal accountability under national legislation.
- (xiii) Take measures to conduct child and victim-sensitive investigations and to ensure that victims and witnesses receive necessary protection during investigations and judicial proceedings.
- (xiv) Take part in joint investigations into alleged sexual exploitation and abuse between National Investigation Officers and the designated United Nations investigative entity, where appropriate and in accordance with national procedures.
- (xv) Hold commanders accountable for the discipline and good order of members of their contingents and formed police units, and for failures to ensure that those under their command comply with the United Nations standards of conduct.
- (xvi) Ensure that, administrative rules, regulations or codes governing police and military while in service of United Nations peace operations explicitly recognize all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse as misconduct attracting sanctions that are commensurate with those imposed domestically.
- (xvii) Take all necessary steps, as available, to apply disciplinary measures and/or undertake criminal prosecutions to hold nationals accountable for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse under the national legal framework, whether such acts involve United Nations civilian personnel that are nationals of the Member State or personnel provided by the Member State, and ensure that all such measures are enforced.
- (xviii) Work to remove existing obstacles, if any, to the criminal prosecution for crimes involving sexual exploitation and abuse committed by its nationals, including through consideration of legislative reform, if appropriate, including situations where culpable individuals have left their national service, and work to remove any obstacles to the provision of effective remedies for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by its nationals while in service of United Nations peace operations.
- (xix) Ensure that all appropriate disciplinary and judicial decisions and remedies are enforced.
- (xx) Test DNA samples in connection with paternity or child support claims, or investigations related to sexual exploitation and abuse, in compliance with national procedures, in order to support the relevant proceedings. The United Nations will endeavor to provide assistance to the Member State for this purpose, upon request.
- (xxi) Consider additional prevention measures, in the predeployment phase, to support accountability.

While not a legally binding document, the Compact is a statement of common purpose and intent on the part of the United Nations and signatory Member States to end the scourge of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations.

For the Government of [MEMBER STATE]

For the United Nations

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Secretary-General