## Statement at the 75<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Sixth Committee Agenda Item 77: Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission Elizabeth Grosso, Attorney-Adviser United States Mission to the United Nations October 12, 2020

Thank you, Chair.

We would once again like to express our gratitude to the officials and experts on mission who perform the critical work of the United Nations. The vast majority of these officials and experts uphold the high standards of integrity expected of those working on behalf of the United Nations, and have earned our admiration.

We emphasize that the United Nations and its Member States must remain vigilant in protecting the credibility of the United Nations in carrying out this work, and clear-eyed about the effect incidents of criminal behavior by UN officials and experts on mission have

United States reiterates its firmly-held belief that UN officials and experts on mission should be held accountable for the crimes they commit.

The United States has taken note of the Secretary General most recent report on this issue, and thanks the Secretary General and the relevant UN agencies for the progress noted in that report. In particular, the United States welcomes the changes to IAEA policies, regulations, rules, and procedures to facilitate more efficient investigation of reported misconduct and greater protections for whistle-blowers. We look forward to learning more about the new zero-tolerance anti-fraud policy, and hope that more forceful anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies are adopted by all agencies and organizations in the UN system. The

specialized agencies, and related organizations continue to examine these issues and revise internal rules and procedures, with the goal of greater accountability for criminal conduct and sexual exploitation or abuse committed by UN officials and experts.

criminal investigations, even those that do not involve allegations against a UN

official, but about which the UN may have relevant information. The UN Office

follow up with Member States to which referrals of criminal allegations have been made when no response has been received, and we appreciate their readiness to assist, when requested, on all referrals.

Such referrals, or complaints made directly to national authorities, will only be meaningful when Member States can and do take action on them. We encourage all member states to investigate and, as appropriate, prosecute such referrals and to communicate with the UN about any barriers they may face in doing so. We note in this regard the U.S. Department of Justice announcement, dated September 2, 2020, that Karim Elkorany, a former communications specialist with the United Nations in Iraq, was charged with two counts of making false statements to special agents of the FBI in an effort to conceal his druggial (5)0(0d) 2(0d) 2(10d) 2