

**Statement of Commitment on
Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel**

We, UN and non-UN entities¹, re-affirm our determination to prevent future acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by our personnel².

We note the issuance of this Statement at the High-level Conference on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and NGO Personnel on 4 December 2006 in New York, USA and welcome future endorsement of this Statement by others.

We recall the six core principles³ relating to sexual exploitation and abuse adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Working Group in July 2002⁴. We note that these principles have been incorporated into organization-specific codes of conduct, rules and regulations and are thereby binding on personnel. In particular, they are binding on United Nations staff and related personnel and outlined in the Secretary-General's Bulletin *Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse* (ST/SGB/2003/13).

We recall that these standards were promulgated to further protect the most vulnerable populations, especially women, girls and boys, and recognize that in countries where we operate, conditions such as poverty, weak rule of law and displacement and the destruction of community structures due to conflict, increase the vulnerability of communities to sexual exploitation and abuse, including human trafficking, by our personnel and others.

We further recall that creating and maintaining a living and working environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse is both an individual and organizational responsibility. We note that the management culture of an organization, the equal representation of women and men at all levels of the organization and the adequacy of the living and working environment all contribute to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

We underline the importance of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and stress the need for swift, decisive action when such acts do occur. We note the specific duties of managers and commanders in this regard, outlined for the United Nations in section 4 of the Bulletin.

¹ See "Appendix 1: List of Endorsing Entities" for a full listing of entities that endorse the Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel

² "Our personnel" includes: United Nations staff and related personnel such as United Nations Volunteers, personnel or employees of non-United Nations entities or individuals who have entered into a cooperative arrangement with the United Nations (including interns, international and local consultants as well as individual and corporate contractors), experts on mission including United Nations police officers, members of national formed police units, corrections officers and military observers, as well as military members of national contingents serving in United Nations peacekeeping missions); personnel as defined by international organizations and their membership bodies; and personnel of non-governmental organizations.

³ See "Appendix 2: Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse"

⁴ The 2002 Report and Plan of Action of the IASC Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises established six core principles relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, to be incorporated into the codes of conduct and staff rules and regulations of member organizations.

We recognize that significant progress has been made to-date to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse by our personnel, and note that we are at different stages of implementing the IASC six core principles on sexual exploitation and abuse.

We re-affirm our goal of achieving full implementation of these principles as a matter of urgency and commit to:

- 1. Develop organization-specific strategies to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.** These would include time-bound, measurable indicators of progress to enable our organizations and others to monitor our performance.
- 2. Incorporate our standards on sexual exploitation and abuse in induction materials and training courses for our personnel.**
- 3. Prevent perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse from being (re-)hired or (re-)deployed.** This could include use of background and criminal reference checks.
- 4. Ensure that complaint mechanisms for reporting sexual exploitation and abuse are accessible and that focal points for receiving complaints understand how to discharge their duties.**
- 5. Take appropriate action to the best of our abilities to protect persons from retaliation where allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse are reported involving our personnel.**
- 6. Investigate allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in a timely and professional manner.** This includes the use of appropriate interviewing practice with complainants and witnesses, particularly with children.
- 7. Take swift and appropriate action against our personnel who commit sexual exploitation and abuse.** This may include administrative or disciplinary action, and/or referral to the relevant authorities for appropriate action, including criminal prosecution.
- 8. Provide basic emergency assistance to complainants of sexual exploitation and abuse.**
- 9. Regularly inform our personnel and communities on measures taken to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.** Such information should be developed and disseminated in-country in cooperation with other relevant agencies and should include details on complaints mechanisms, the status and outcome of investigations in general terms, feedback on actions taken against perpetrators and follow-up measures taken as well as assistance available to complainants and victims.
- 10. Engage the support of communities and governments to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse by our personnel.**

Appendix 1: List of Endorsing Entities

United Nations Entities

1. Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA), Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka
2. Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo
3. Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno
4. Department of Political Affairs (DPA), Mr. Ibrahim Gambari
5. Department of Public Information (DPI), Mr. Shashi Tharoor
6. Department of Management (DM), Mr. Warren Sach OIC
7. Department of Safety and Security (DSS), Mr. David Veness
8. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Mr. Jacques Diouf
9. International Trade Centre, Ms. Patricia Francis
10. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Mr. Jan Egeland
11. Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), Mr. Nicolas Michel
12. Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), Mr. Joseph Legwaila Legwaila
13. Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG/CAAC), Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy
14. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Ms. Louise Arbour
15. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Mr. Antonio Guterres
16. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Ms. Ann Veneman
17. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr. Kemal Dervis
18. United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), Major-General Wolfgang Jilke
19. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), Ms. Anna K. Tibaijuka
20. United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), Mr. Atul Khare
21. United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Mr. Joachim Rucker
22. United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), Major-General Claudio Graziano
23. United Nations Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), Mr. Abou Moussa (OIC)
24. United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), Mr. Azouz Ennifar
25. United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), Mr. Taye-Brook Zerihoun
26. United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Mr. Julian Harston
27. United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), Major General Dragutin Repinc
28. United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), Mr. Jean Arnault
29. United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze
30. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Mr. Antonio Maria Costa
31. United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Mr. Jan Mattsson
32. United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), Mr. William Lacy Swing

33. United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), Mr. Michael Moller
34. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Mr. Thoraya Obaid
35. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ms. Karen Koning AbuZayd
36. United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Mr. Edmond Mulet
37. United Nations Staff Union, Mr. Stephen Kisambira
38. United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), Major General Ian Gordon
39. United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Mr. Ad de Raad
40. World Food Programme (WFP), Mr. James Morris
41. World Health Organization (WHO), Mr. Anders Nordstrom (Acting)

Non-United Nations Entities

1. Action By Churches Together (ACT), Mr. John Nduna - Director
2. Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA UK), Ms. Barbara E. Harrell-Bond, OBE, Executive Director for Overseas Operations
3. Africare, Mr. Julius E. Coles - President
4. American Refugee Committee International (ARC) Mr. Hugh Parmer - President
5. Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) Mr. P.M. Tripathi - President
6. Care International, Mr. Denis Caillaux
7. Caritas Internationalis, Mr. Duncan MacLaren - Secretary General
8. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Mr. Ken Hackett, President
9. Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Mr. Bill Leahey, Acting CEO
10. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC-US), Mr. Andrew Ryskamp - Director
11. Concern Worldwide, Mr. Tom Arnold, Chief Executive
12. End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT International), Ms. Carmen M. Madriñán, Executive Director
13. HelpAge International (HAI), Mr. Richard Blewitt - Chief Executive
14. International Medical Corps (IMC), Ms. Nancy Aosse - President and Chief Executive Officer
15. International Rescue Committee (IRC), Mr. George Rupp - President and Chief Executive Officer
16. Mercy Corps, Ms. Nancy Lindborg - President
17. Médecins du Monde France (MDM F), Mr. Pierre Micheletti - Chairman
18. Lutheran World Relief, Mr. Jeff Whisenant
19. Austrian Red Cross, Mr. Wolfgang Kopetzky
20. Italian Red Cross, Mr. Massimo Barra
21. Red Cross of Monaco, HSH Prince Albert II
22. Refugees International (RI), Mr. Kenneth H. Bacon - President
23. Relief International, Mr. Farshad Rastegar, CEO
24. Operation USA, Mr. Richard M. Walden, President and Chief Executive Officer
25. Pact, Inc., Ms. Sarah Newhall, President and Chief Executive Officer

26. Plan International, Mr. Tom Miller, Chief Executive Officer
27. Population Action International (PAI), Mr. Amy Cohen, Chief Executive Officer and President
28. Save the Children UK (SC UK), Ms. Jasmine Whitbread - Chief Executive
29. Save the Children Alliance, Ms. Jasmine Whitbread - Chief Executive
30. Tearfund, Mr. Matthew Frost - Chief Executive
31. Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH), Mr. Karl-Henrik Sjursen, Head of Mission
32. Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, Ms. Delia Chatoor, President
33. Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development (Winrock International), Mr. Frank Tugwell - President and Chief Executive Officer
34. Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Ms. Carolyn Makinson - Executive Director

Status as of 19 August 2008

Appendix 2: Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse⁵

1. “Sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian workers constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for termination of employment.
2. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence.
3. Exchange of money, employment, goods, or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour is prohibited. This includes exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries.
4. Sexual relationships between humanitarian workers and beneficiaries are strongly discouraged since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics. Such relationships undermine the credibility and integrity of humanitarian aid work.
5. Where a humanitarian worker develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual abuse or exploitation by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not, he or she must report such concerns via established agency reporting mechanisms.
6. Humanitarian workers are obliged to create and maintain an environment which prevents sexual exploitation and abuse and promotes the implementation of their code of conduct. Managers at all levels have particular responsibilities to support and develop systems which maintain this environment.”

⁵ See Report of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises of 13 June 2002, Plan of Action, Section I.A.